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A BOOK OF BRITTANY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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A BOOK OF DARTMOOR

A BOOK OF THE WEST. TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I. DEVON

„ II. CORNWALL

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# A BOOK OF BRITTANY

BY S. BARING-GOULD

WITH SIXTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS

METHUEN & CO.  
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.  
LONDON

1901



## PREFACE

THIS book is not to be taken as a Guide, consequently only here and there is to be found in it a detailed account of a town or a church or castle.

The purpose for which it is written is to supply the reader with that which is not to be found in guide-books ; the purpose being to prepare the mind of the traveller to appreciate what the guide-books point out to him as worth seeing.

A French writer, M. Alphonse Allais, says: "What characterises the English tourist more than anything is the air of profound *ennui* which never leaves him from his arrival at Calais or Dieppe to the moment of his return to his native land. France visibly bores the Englishman ; he is interested in nothing, listens with a *distrain* air to the explanations of the guide, takes a vague look at the monument or work of art pointed out to him, and never seems to arrive at any place save in order to go on immediately to another."

This is true, but it is true because the majority of visitors do not comprehend what they see. It is not the province of their guide-books to instruct

them ; and it is to fill in such a deficiency that I have written this little work. When the reader has read it he will find that there is a human background, against which the objects he sees in visiting Brittany stand out, and which gives to them interest and stimulates his observation.

I have been constrained to omit mention of Nantes, to which a chapter might have been devoted. My reasons were two. In the first place, I was afraid of making my book too long and bulky ; in the second, Nantes does not belong to the Breton people. That people extends along the seaboard to S. Nazare, and occupies the great turf moor of La Bruyère, but does not stretch further inland. On the south bank of the Loire the inhabitants talk the Poitou dialect, on the north that which is Angevin, and not Breton at all.

As guides, nothing can be better than Joanne's little blue-backed DEPARTMENTAL GEOGRAPHIES, that cost one franc each. They are accurate, and give particulars as to what is to be seen in each commune. They do not, however, indicate hotels. For this purpose the visitor will find the "Bretagne" of the *Guides Joanne* more serviceable, as it gives extensive information relative to all that is noticeable on the main roads, and lists of hotels as well.

An architect will complain that I have dealt with the styles in an inadequate manner. I have sought to give a rough-and-ready clue to the ordinary traveller, to enable him to distinguish the periods at



which a building was erected; and the chapter on Architecture is not intended for the specialist.

In that on Prehistoric Archæology I have been obliged to go over the same ground as I have trodden in my *Book of Dartmoor*; but this was unavoidable, as similar monuments occur in Brittany and Devonshire.

Again, in my chapter on the History of Brittany I have not touched on the Chouannerie, but have concluded with the union of the Duchy with the French crown. The history of the Royalist struggle against the Revolution is accessible in every History of France.

Nor have I dealt with the British defeat at S. Cast, nor the butchery of English soldiery at Landevennec, when, as Macaulay says, Marlborough "sent intelligence to the French court of a secret expedition intended to attack Brest. The consequence was that the expedition failed, and eight hundred British soldiers lost their lives from the abandoned villainy of a British general." Such episodes are too painful to dwell on. I have been obliged to select, and have chosen such as belong to the early history of Brittany, and such as are not to be found in ordinary text books.

Finally, I owe obligations to several kind friends who have assisted me with their knowledge, as M. Jean Even and Mrs. Walker, of Dinan; M. Villard, of Quimper, has also kindly allowed me the use of some of his admirable photographs. The same debt I owe to Dr. Millard, of Dinard.



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## ERRATA

Page 85, line 10.

FOLGOËT

For "1st Sunday in September" read  
"September 7th and 8th."

Page 85, line 11.

BELON

For "Sept. 3rd" read "September 8th."



MARCHÉ AUX CHIFFONS



# BRITTANY

## CHAPTER I

### THE BRETON PEOPLE

The Breton peninsula—The dolmen-builders—The Gauls—The Roman conquest—The migration from Britain—The secular tribe or *plou*—The ecclesiastical tribe—Place-names—Iberian, Gaul, and Briton—Characteristics of the Breton—The Bigauden—Classification.

BRITTANY comprises the whole of the north-western peninsula of France from the Couesnon, a small stream that falls into the Bay of S. Michel, to the ocean westward, and southward from the sea to the Loire, forming the five modern departments of Ille-et-Vilaine, Loire-Inférieure, Côtes-du-Nord, Finistère, and the Morbihan.

It is roughly divided into Haute and Basse Bretagne; the latter consists of that portion of Brittany to the west in which the Breton tongue is spoken.

The entire province is peppered over with monuments of rude stone blocks set on end, or forming sepulchral chambers. So numerous are these that there is scarce a parish that does not possess one or more of them.

Considering that hundreds of thousands have been

destroyed, it is a marvel that so many remain. They are evidence to us that at a remote period Brittany was densely peopled by that race which has left these remarkable monuments wherever it went.

This race, which is called the Iberian, Ivernian, or Silurian, was probably sallow, dark-haired, and dark-eyed. It underlies the population of all Western Europe. It came from Asia, travelling along the northern slopes of the Caucasus, passed through Southern Russia, leaving its monuments in the Crimea. It struck the Baltic, occupied Hanover, Denmark, and Southern Sweden. It crossed to Britain; it spread over the whole island, and planted itself in Ireland, where it appears in the early records as divided into two clans, the Firbolgs and the Tuatha da Danann.

Another branch skirted the Channel, and went through Western France, crossed the Pyrenees, and set up its rude stone monuments in Portugal and Spain. It crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, and is now represented in North Africa by the Berbers and Kabyles.\*

The Gauls, at some unknown period, conquered this people, and remained masters of the soil. They portioned out the land in what we now call Brittany among five tribes, which held the positions now divided into the five departments.† The original population was enserfed, not exterminated, and probably continued to employ for some time its own tongue.

\* But the Kabyles are fair with blue eyes. See MACIVER and WILKIN, *Libyan Notes*. London, 1901.

† The Curiosoliti in Côtes-du-Nord; the Osismi in Finistère; Veneti in Morbihan; Nanneti in Loire-Inférieure; and the Redones in Ille-et-Vilaine.

Then came the Roman domination.

The conquerors of the world drove two main roads through the peninsula, and established everywhere cities and camps. The Gauls so rapidly assimilated Roman civilisation, that, among the many inscriptions that date from the period of the Imperial rule, hardly more than three have been found that bear Gaulish names.

The Gauls not only acquired the common tongue of their masters and adopted their nomenclature, but also assimilated their native deities to the gods of the dominant power. A monument has been found, now preserved at Kernuz, near Pont l'Abbé, that bears on its four faces, on two sides the Latin gods, Jupiter and Mercury, and on the other two a couple of native deities.

So little were the rude stone relics of the first race respected, that the Gallo-Romans used them up as corner-stones of their villas and camps.

For a while Armorica, as Brittany was then called, flourished, and the numerous structural remains of this period attest that art and culture had taken root.

Then came the disastrous days of the later Empire, when the provincials were crushed under exactions, and the oppressed population fled from the tax-gatherers to the woods and wastes. To add to the misery, sea-rovers from Frisia and Saxony, and Ireland as well, ravaged the coasts.

The population dwindled to such an extent that at length it was said of the Armorican peninsula that it was almost denuded of its inhabitants. Those

who remained had no political cohesion. The Gallo-Roman dominant race had shrunk within the walls of Rennes, Vannes, and Nantes. Such was the condition of affairs, when in Britain the incursions of the Picts and Scots (Irish) made life there unendurable, and numerous Britons fled their native isle and formed colonies in Armorica. So early as 461 the British settlers were in sufficient force at the mouth of the Loire to have a bishop of their own, who attended a council at Tours; and eight years after they sent twelve thousand men under their king, Riothimus, to the assistance of the Romans against the Visigoths.

The emigration became still greater as the Saxons and Angles poured over the sea, and swept the unhappy Britons westward.

Gildas, in the sixth century, declared that the inhabitants of his native isle fled to the mountains before the swords of the Saxons, that others submitted and were enslaved, but that others again crossed the sea to seek refuge elsewhere. One colony was even formed in the north of Spain, where it long preserved its language, its liturgy, laws, and native bishops.

The vast majority, however, found a home in Armorica.

An early writer in that peninsula says, "The sons of the Britons crossing the British sea landed on these shores at the period when the barbarous Saxons conquered the isle. These children of a beloved race established themselves in this country, glad to find repose after so many sorrows. The unfortunate

Britons who had not quitted their country were decimated by plague. Their corpses lay without sepulture, and the major portion of the isle was depopulated."

A writer of the ninth century pretends that the greater portion of the inhabitants of Britain crossed over into Armorica, but this is obviously an exaggeration.

In or about 514 Rhiwal arrived from South Wales with a large fleet in the Bay of S. Brieuc, and founded the principality of Domnonia, and rapidly extended his authority over the whole of Northern Brittany.

Another swarm came from Gwent, now Monmouthshire, where existence had become insupportable, owing to the incursions of the Saxons over the Calder and Wentloog levels and the valley of the Usk.

This Gwentian colony planted itself in the north-west of the Armorican peninsula, and called it Leon or Lyonesse, after the Caerleon that had been abandoned.

Again, another large fleet of refugees arrived, probably from Cornwall, on the west coast, and formed there a kingdom which was called Cernau or Cornouaille.

By degrees Vannes, itself a Gallo-Roman city, was enveloped by the new-comers, so that in 590 the bishop, Regalis, complained that he was, as it were, imprisoned by them within the walls of the city. The Gallo-Roman prelate disliked these invaders and their independent ways. The Britons had brought

with them their own laws, customs, and organisation, civil and ecclesiastical, as well as their own tongue.

In or about 520 the bishops of Tours, Angers, and Rennes issued a letter to some of the British priests, exhorting them to abandon their religious peculiarities, and conform to the usages of the Latin Church in Gaul.

Now it was that the peninsula ceased to be called Armorica, and came to be known as Lesser Britain, or Brittany.

"The British emigration gave to the Armorican peninsula a new population of Celtic race and tongue — a people proud, energetic, independent — which cleared, cultivated, and Christianised the land; in a word, created Brittany."\*

Every colony that came over was under a chieftain of the hereditary royal race, and it proceeded to organise itself in its new land on the same model as that to which it was wont in its old seat. This organisation was tribal.

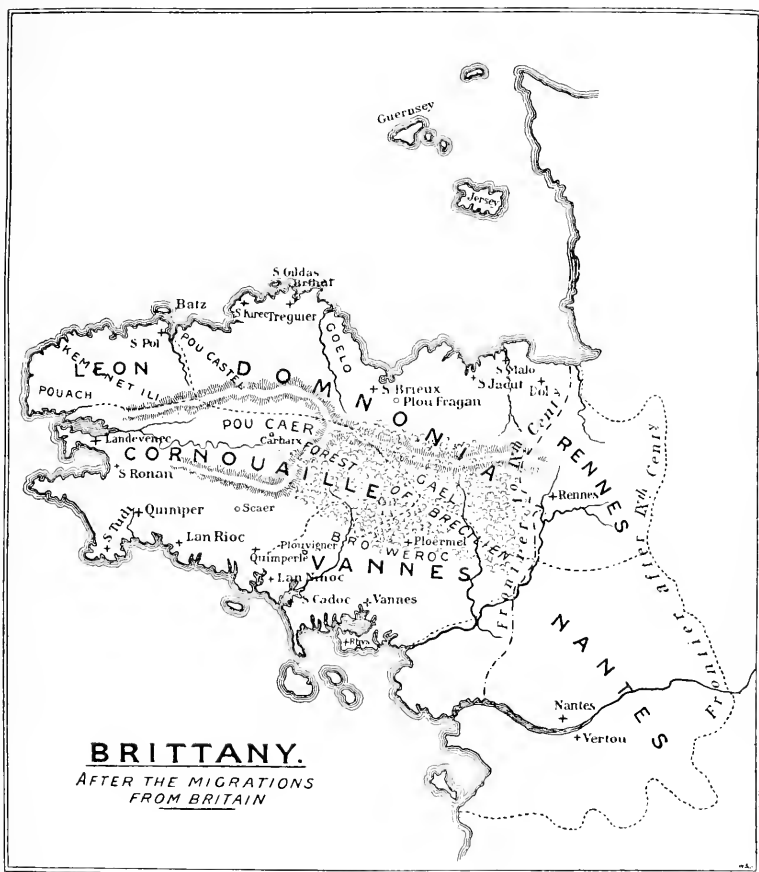
A clan in Welsh is *plwg*, in Breton it is *plou*, and the Latin equivalent is *plebs*.

A large number of names of places in Brittany begin with *plou*, *plo*, *plu*, *plé*. All these were the headquarters of the clans. In every clan the population was located in *tre**fs*, or homesteads, and many villages have names beginning with *tre*.

The chief himself had his *caer* or fortified residence, and his *lis* was where he held his court of justice.

Now the Britons who came over were all Christians. The secular organisation being complete, the

\* DE LA BORDERIE, *Hist. de Bretagne*, i. p. 279.







next thing to be done was to establish an ecclesiastical organisation.

Among the Celts all authority was gathered into the hands of hereditary chiefs. Of these there were two kinds—the military chief and the ecclesiastical chief (the saint). Each was head of his own clan, and had separate lands; but the ecclesiastical tribe was required to render military service to the secular chief who had granted the lands to the saint; the ecclesiastical chief, on the other hand, was bound to provide for the religious needs of the secular as well as of the ecclesiastical tribe, and to educate the young of both. A very similar organisation existed among the Hebrews, among whom were nine secular tribes and one that was ecclesiastical, but with this difference, that among the Hebrews there was no passing from a secular into a sacred tribe; whereas among the Celts the ecclesiastical clan was recruited from the other.

Whether invited or not, a saint came over when a brother or cousin had established a *plou*, and demanded a grant of territory. Having been accorded this, he enclosed a small area with a bank. Within this he and his monastic family lived. This was his *lann*, his church-fold, with its surrounding sanctuary called the *minihi*. It was through the sanctuary that the tribe of the saint recruited itself. To it fled those who were being pursued in blood feud, runaway slaves, aliens, in a word, all such as could find no footing in the military clan.

The term "saint" did not necessarily mean one who was of conspicuous holiness, but corresponds to

“religieux” in France, one who had made profession of ecclesiastical life, and was head of a sacred tribe.

A list of those words which belong to this early organisation, and which enter into composition in so many place-names, may be useful:—

Bo, bod, bot = bodd (Welsh), a habitation, a cottage.

Car, ker = caer (Welsh), a fortress.

Din = dinas (Welsh), a palace, a castle.

Lan, lam, la, le = llan (Welsh), an ecclesiastical enclosure, a church.

Loq, lou = locus penitentiae (Latin), a hermitage.

Peniti = do. do. do.

Plou, plo, plu, plé = plwgf (Welsh), a clan.

Pou, peu, pé = pagus (Latin), a territory occupied by a clan.

Tre = tref (Welsh), a farm, a settlement or hamlet.

To each of these is appended a distinguishing word, either descriptive or from the name of the founder.

A few more words may be given—*bré* is a hill; *coët*, a wood; *guen*, white; *hen*, old; *menez*, mountain; *pen*, a head; *poul*, a bay or pool; *ros*, a moor.

On the Armorican soil there were now three peoples, of whom two alone were distinct—the Iberian, probably dusky, and the Celt, fair. The Celt was divided into two branches, the Gaul and the Briton,\* no further distinguished than are the Scan-

\* Great confusion has been caused by a certain school of French ethnologists adopting *Celt* as the distinguishing name for the Iberian, as opposed to the Gaul. I employ the term in its usual and accepted signification in England.

dinavians from the Germans, having similar build, colouring, and language, as well as institutions; but the Gaul had been so Romanised as to have lost his native tongue and organisation.

We would therefore expect to find but two distinct types in Brittany; but, in fact, there has existed such a fusion by intermarriage, that it is only in remote parts that the types remain in their purity. The original canvas has been embroidered over; but so enduring is it that it shows through what has been laid over it, and the general type of the Breton to-day is that of the Cornish, Irish, and Welsh, rather dark than fair. Red and fair hair exist, and blue eyes are met with, but not commonly.

In the interior of Brittany the people are small, the hair is dark, and most have brown eyes. This population occupies one of the poorest and most barren parts of France, a country that has always been protected by its wretchedness from invasion; whose sterility has invited no strangers to settle there, and is one that receives annually such as can find no work elsewhere. The inhabitants live in a condition which is not that of savages, but not the life of civilised people. They continue from generation to generation in almost complete indifference to all progress, and cling tenaciously to ancestral customs. This is the Cornouaille, which was the last to accept the Christianity of the British settlers. It is there that the most infantile superstitions hang on, and where patriotism is parochial. These dusky people of short stature are apparently pure representatives of the Iberian stock that raised the dolmens.

But it has been supposed and asserted roundly that there are traces among them of a still earlier type—of a people resembling the Mongols. Of this I have my doubts.

The Begauds, or Bigauden, are pointed out as of the same type. These people occupy the promontory of Cap Sizun, east of Quimper, from Douarnenez to Ploumelin. The women are short in stature, solid in build, and run like Indians and other wild races on the ball of the foot. They keep their mouths open and expose their teeth, which meet; their jaws are not over- or under-hung, a peculiarity noticeable also in Western Ireland. But the men show no peculiarity, and I am inclined to believe that the singular appearance of these people is due to other causes.

A very keen observer, Mr. Julian Ralph, thus comments on the people of the Land's End district in Cornwall: "Stocky, short, and dark were the men, with jet eyes and black hair. The women possessed sharp little faces, with staring eyes, and were all built out around the hips with ever so many petticoats, and many a touch of bright colour they wore. They are a race apart. They are the Bretons—are the oldest people left, except a few Basques, perhaps, in Western Europe."

Precisely the same type is found in Ireland, in Kerry. It is that of the primitive race driven to the extreme West.

What gives to the women of the Bigauden district their peculiar feature is the way in which the hair is strained upwards from early childhood, and bound down by a belt passing under the chin. This causes

them to hold back their chins against their breasts, and to acquire the trick of keeping their mouths open. The habit of wearing as many skirts as they can put on likewise gives to them a dwarfed and thick build.\*

Along the littoral—except the Bigauden district—we find a people taller, fair, and with a large percentage of blue eyes.†

A great difference in character is noticeable between the people of Finistère and of the Morbihan. The former are grave almost to sternness, the latter are vivacious. The former have longer skulls than the latter. Fair hair and blue eyes are rarely found far inland. In Léon the *paganis* are looked upon with some aversion, as having lived by wrecking. The Léonese are a tall, dark, and saturnine people, wearing black garments.

In conclusion we may sum up our results as follows:—

In Brittany are found—

1. A brown, long-headed race with hazel eyes, short of stature, grave and sad in character, the representative of those who set up the dolmens.

2. A mixed, vivacious, round-headed people, the remains of the Gaul, much intermingled with the Iberian in the French-speaking parts of the Côtes-du-Nord and in Morbihan.

\* See an article by M. le Carquet, "Etude Ethnographique sur les Bigaudens," in *Bulletin de la Soc. Arch. du Finistère*, P. xxvii., 1900.

† The percentage is thirty-two blue to thirty-seven brown. See an article, "Ethnologie Armoricaïne," by Dr. Guibert, *Congrès Celtique Internationale*, October, 1867.

3. The tall, fair-haired, clear-skinned, and light-eyed descendant of the British colonist on the sea-board.

That the colonist brought over his serfs with him is probable enough. As in Wales, so in Brittany, the pure-blooded Celt was the noble ruling race, and this has been largely submerged by the rising, irresistible tide of the Iberian blood.

## CHAPTER II

### PREHISTORIC STONES

Numerous rude stone monuments—By whom erected—The religion of the dolmen-builders—The Goddess of Death—Classification of monuments—1. The dolmen—2. The menhir—3. The alignments—4. The cromlech—Persistence of pagan ideas—The fusion of paganism with Christianity—How it came about—Transformation of the cult of wells and of stones—Oblations of cattle—Of wax—Rubbing against stones—The chapel at Langon—The dolmen of Plouaret—The cult of the dead—The woman who visited purgatory—The Ankou—The Venus of Quinipili—Breton Christianity of life.

NO portion of Europe is so densely strewn with rude stone monuments as the two departments of Finistère and Morbihan. There may be finer "covered avenues" in the sandstone district of Maine-et-Loire and Vienne; nor is there any circle comparable with Stonehenge; but the alignments of Carnac and Erdeven and the menhir of Locmariaquer are without their equals elsewhere. The sculptured slabs of Gavv Inis have their analogues only at New Grange, near Drogheda.

The rude stone monuments belong, as already stated, to the so-called Iberian race, which arrived in Europe from Central Asia by the northern slopes of the Caucasus.

On reaching France, this people occupied the west coast, penetrating, however, some distance into the interior, and strewing the elevated plateaux cleft by the Tarn, the Lot, and the Dordogne with their sepulchres. They traversed Spain and Portugal, crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, and covered Northern Africa with their monuments in historic times.

The religion of this remarkable race consisted in the worship of ancestors, in this point closely resembling that of the Chinese.

The grave was the most sacred spot on earth, the centre of the tribe, inalienable; and the spirit of the dead was supposed to animate the obelisk erected to commemorate him, and to expect and insist on oblations being offered at his tomb. But there were deities as well—a Goddess of Death certainly, whose rude image has been found guarding the subterranean sepulchres met with in the chalk district of Marne, and discovered by the Baron de Baye. She reappears on a dolmen in the department of Garde.

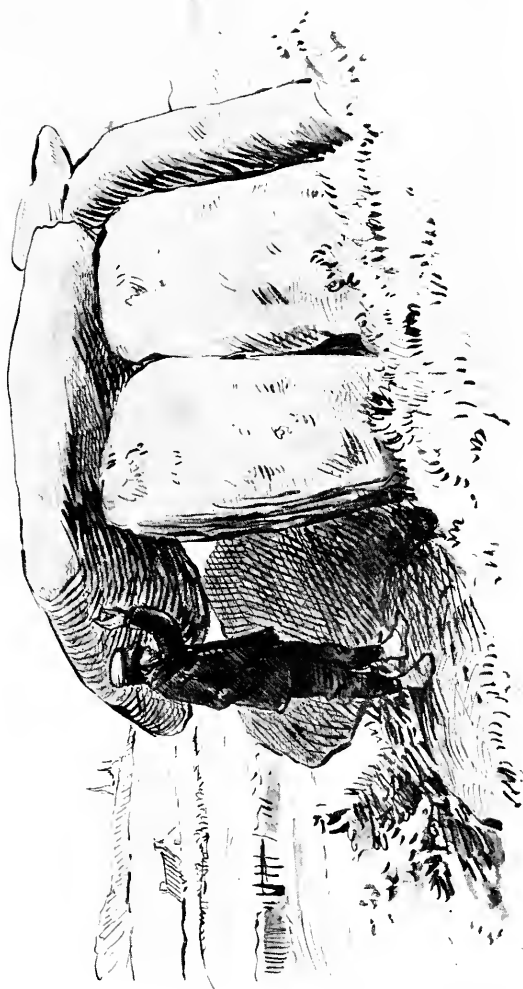
The monuments that remain in such abundance have all their significance in connexion with the worship of the dead.

They may be divided under four heads:—

1. The *dolmen* is a stone table supported on several uprights. It was a sepulchral chamber, and was originally buried under a mound.

The largest dolmens, which consist of passages of this construction, are in French termed *allées couvertes*. These were family or tribal ossuaries, and the dead were laid in them unburnt, with their weapons and personal ornaments. The weapons are





DOLMEN, NEAR TRÉGASTEL.



of polished stone, but in some of the later examples of bronze.

The primitive people who reared these mansions of the dead held that every inanimate object had its soul, and to liberate this spirit the ornament or weapon was broken, thus enabling the spirit of the dead man to enjoy his tools, weapons, and decorations also in spirit. Consequently the objects discovered in the dolmens are generally fractured.

When fresh interments had to be made, and the mausoleum was tolerably full, no scruple was felt in thrusting back the earlier interments to make space for the new-comers. On the anniversary of the death, or at the solstices, it was customary for the relations to bring out the bones of their immediate relatives, scrape them, and replace them in the tomb, in the order that they supposed they ought to occupy. They were sometimes mistaken, placing a right foot to a left shank, or the hands not in correct position.

Some of the *allées couvertes* are of considerable length, are divided into compartments, and are covered with enormous slabs.

2. The *menhir* is an upright stone, standing alone ; but one cannot be certain that it is not a solitary stone spared from a row that has been destroyed. In England this is nearly always the case. Some of the Brittany menhirs are very lofty. The obelisk at Dol is 28 feet high above the soil, and is sunk 16 feet below the surface. The Men-er-H'roech at Locmariaquer was 64 feet high, but was shattered by a stroke of lightning.

At S. Samson by Dinan is a menhir inclined,

treasure-seekers having undermined it. This menhir was in connexion with a set of stone-rows that must have stretched for some miles, as they are met with much mutilated in an adjoining parish.

Sometimes these upright stones have hollows worked in them—cup-marks—that have been objects

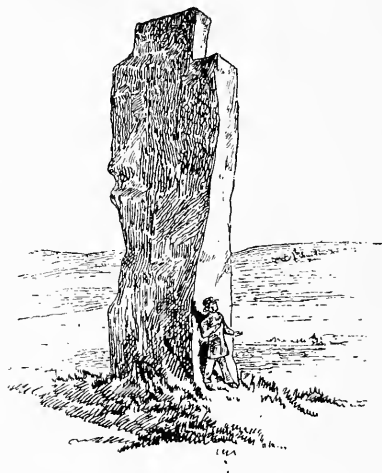


FIG. I. MENHIR NEAR SCAER

of much speculation. Councils of the Church in Gaul expressly forbade the anointing of these obelisks, and to the present day in remote localities the peasants still daub them with honey, wax, or oil.

The Khashias of the Brahmapootra, who are apparently descendants of a branch of the same Iberian race that took a direction south when migrating, to this day erect dolmens and set up menhirs—the former as mausoleums of the dead, the latter as

memorials of the deceased, and these they daub with blood or paint.

3. The *alignment* is a series of parallel rows of upright stones erected in honour of a dead chief, each household contributing a stone. To this day the Bedawin, when he visits the shrine of a Moslem saint, erects a rude block as a token that he has visited and paid his homage to the deceased.

On Dartmoor, where there are over a quarter of a hundred of these stone-rows, all without exception start from a tomb. In one instance, where three bodies had been buried in as many stone boxes in one cairn, three rows start from the same mound. The alignments of Carnac and Erdeven and of S. Briac, etc., have been too much mutilated for us to be able to trace them throughout their course, and determine whence they started and where they end.

The custom was never wholly discontinued. With the advent of the Britons menhirs continued to be set up, and were called *lechs*, some bearing inscriptions, but many without. Indeed, it was usual for a saint when he travelled to take his lech about with him, ready to be planted at his head when he died. A great number of these remain.

4. What was the object of the circle of upright stones, called by the French *cromlech*, is not so easy to determine. Systematic investigation has not been made of such as exist in Brittany.

On Dartmoor those that have been subjected to investigation reveal that they were the places where the dead were burned. But these pertain to a later period than the monuments of Brittany, which were

set up, in the vast majority of cases, before cremation came into fashion. It is, however, probable that the circles of upright stones served as gathering-places for the clan, and for funeral feasts and the equinoctial banquets.

To this day, when the Breton peasants prepare the bonfires for the village feast or for the Midsummer Eve, they set up a ring of stones about the pyre.

It may be asked, Do there remain among the people any traces of their ancient paganism? It is hardly possible to deny that there do—and these extensively.

A vast amount of Breton religious practice is but a relic of prehistoric paganism, such as was practised from time immemorial to the coming of the British colonists and the conversion of the natives to Christianity. But these practices have all assumed a Christian complexion.

It will be well to understand how this came about.

The Church, as a corporate body, had no hand in the compromise, which was effected by the clergy in country places. These, finding that their flocks stubbornly persisted in certain usages, such as the veneration of wells and trees, and in superstitious practices associated with the menhirs, in spite of remonstrance, were in a dilemma. To appeal to the ecclesiastical and secular authorities to exercise compulsion, was to render themselves odious to their parishioners; and they may well have doubted whether an exhibition of force could eradicate deep conviction and abolish ancestral customs. Accord-

ingly, each village priest, acting on his own judgment as to what was best for his flock and conducive to peace, did what he could to give to the usages a colour which would render them unobjectionable, and save his parishioners from incurring chastisement by the ecclesiastical or secular arm. Moreover, it must be remembered that diocesan seminaries did not exist till little more than two centuries ago. Throughout the Middle Ages the clergy, recruited from among the people, lived among them; and at home, when their minds were forming, they obtained a smattering of Latin and the rudiments of theology from the village priest, unless sufficiently well off to be able to go to a university—and this was not possible for a Breton student who could speak only his Celtic tongue.

When one of these men was ordained and sent to minister among a flock of ignorant and superstitious peasants, he was himself hardly removed from their ignorance, and was impregnated with their superstitions.

These were the men who dedicated holy wells, cut crosses on menhirs, and turned dolmens into chapels. I am not prepared to say that they did not act aright. They certainly did what was charitable; and if, being a little ahead of the superstitious, they tolerated the superstitions, it was because they trusted that in time the population would be weaned from these customs, and put away childish things. But that time has not yet come, and the reason is to be seen in the protracted agony through which Brittany passed for two hundred years, and in the

obstruction offered by the Breton language to the clergy becoming as learned and intelligent as those of France.

Moreover, the clergy had good examples to follow. S. Samson found the Cornish natives dancing around a tall stone, and he did not break it down; he contented himself with marking a cross on it. S. Patrick learned that the Irish venerated a well in which they soaked the bones of a Druid; he turned the well into a baptistery, and gave them Christian relics to venerate instead of pagan phosphate of lime.

In 658 a council assembled at Nantes decreed—“As in remote places and in woodlands there stand certain stones which the people often worship, and at which vows are made, and to which oblations are presented—we decree that they be all cast down and concealed in such a place that their worshippers may not be able to find them.”

Now the carrying out of their order was left to the country parsons, and partly because they had themselves been brought up to respect these stones, and partly because the execution of the decree would have brought down a storm upon their heads, they contented themselves with putting a cross on top of the stones.

This has saved the great menhir of the Champ Dolent near Dol, as it certainly has many another. At Tregastel is one that has its top rudely shaped into a cross, and its face sculptured over with the instruments of the Passion, that are periodically repainted in staring colours.

At Pouancé a hole cut in the face of a menhir has





MENHIR, TRÉGASTEL



an image of the Virgin put into it, and the oblations once offered to the stone are now directed to the statue.

In ancient times sacrifices were made of cocks and oxen at certain shrines—now they are still presented, but it is to the chapels of saints. S. Herbot receives cows' tails, and these may be seen heaped upon his altar in Loqueffret. At Coadret as many as seven hundred are offered on the day of the "pardon." At S. Nicolas-des-Eaux, it is S. Nicodemus who in his chapel receives gifts of whole oxen, and much the same takes place at Carnac.

Formerly the menhir was beplastered with oil and honey and wax, and this anointing of the stones was condemned by the bishops. In certain places the local clergy succeeded in diverting the practice to the churches. There are still some in Lower Brittany whose exterior walls are strung with wax lines arranged in festoons and patterns.\*

In some places childless women still rub themselves against menhirs, expecting thereby to be cured of barrenness, but in others, instead, they rub themselves against stone images of saints. Near Carnac is a menhir, at which a singular ceremony took place till comparatively recently, and may perhaps still be practised in secret. A married couple that have no family repair to this stone when the moon is full, strip themselves stark naked and course one another round it a prescribed number of times, whilst their relations keep guard against intrusion at a respectful distance.

\* Rumengol, Kergoat in Kernével, Combrit.

At Langon, in Côtes-du-Nord, is a chapel that was a Roman structure dedicated to the Goddess of Love. The people held it in such esteem that in 838 it was turned into a chapel, and the *Fanum Veneris* was converted into a *Capella Sti. Veneris*. In the apse was a classic fresco representing the goddess rising from the waves surrounded by Cupids. This was whitewashed over and painted with an ecclesiastical subject, probably the martyrdom of S. Fingar, who was called S. Vener. Recently the plaster has flaked off and disclosed the pagan fresco, and the chapel has been dedicated to S. Agatha. Thus the patroness had first to change her sex whilst retaining her name, and finally to resume her sex and drop her name.

At Plouaret is a dolmen turned into a chapel of the Seven Saints;\* thus the cult of the prehistoric dead in the monument has been replaced by that of several local patrons.

Near Plouaret, moreover, is a headless statue of a horseman trampling on a mythical monster, not a S. George, but a statue of some Gallo-Roman deity, that is still resorted to, and is still believed to work miracles. Those who are paralysed are forced up on to the horse's back, and several cures are recorded. Other like statues exist; all have been mutilated by the clergy who endeavour to put down this pagan cult, but without success.

Still, as of old, the cult of the dead is the prevailing religion of Lower Brittany, especially of Finistère.

\* The Seven Saints of Brittany are SS. Samson, Malo, Tugdual, Brioc, Paul of Leon, Corentin, and Padarn; but in the chapel the saints are the Seven Sleepers.





THE END OF THE OLD SAILOR

All observant travellers, from Cambry downwards, have noticed this.

"The idea of Death is everywhere present to the imagination of the natives, and seems to have haunted it through long centuries. . . . Nowhere does one see more numerous and more beautiful memorials of the dead, ossuaries, reliquaries, *ex votos*, and Calvaries. The inscriptions that meet the eye on all sides testify to this obsession. Everywhere, under one form or another, we have a Christianised Worship of the Dead which has its roots in the Druidic necropolis, turning the soil of Brittany into one vast charnel-house." \*

M. Anatole le Braz, who has gathered into one volume the ghastly legends and traditions of Death that pervade Lower Brittany,† has shown us how the *Ankou*, the Divinity of Death, is still believed in and feared.

Marillier, who wrote a preface to this work, says that Lower Brittany is before all else the Land of the Dead. There the deceased dwell intermingled with the living. "Souls do not remain enclosed in the tombs, they wander at night on the high-roads and in the lonely lanes. They haunt the fields and the moors, thick as blades of grass or as grains of sand on the shore." They possess an invincible attachment to their old homes. "They revisit their former habitations in the silence of the night, and from the *lit-clos* they can be observed crouched around the hearth, where the brands are expiring."

"Townsmen," said an old woman to M. le Braz,

\* NICOLAI (ALEX.), *En Bretagne*, 1893, p. 282.

† LE BRAZ, *La Légende de la Mort*, 1892.

"have you come here to see how we honour our dead? Why did you not come forty years ago? Then we went in procession about the tombs and invoked the dead by their names, in a commemorative litany, calling on our dead in the order in which they laid them down. There were long memories in those days. The father transmitted what he knew to his son, as the most precious lot of his inheritance. The saying then went, You will be wiser dead than living, and we had then a continual solicitude for the departed, so that when we, in turn, became ancestors, we should not be forgotten. It is better to have the goodwill of the *anon* than their hostility; their resentments are terrible, and their revenges inevitable."

Of this same old woman a strange thing was said. The gravedigger told her that he had heard her husband turning and twisting in his grave, as one in bed bitten by fleas, and that he was certain his soul was not happy. "I will go and see," replied the woman, and she vanished from the neighbourhood for a twelve-month. When she reappeared, she was completely changed past recognition, her fresh tint was gone and she was withered, and her skin exhaled a savour of fire. She would tell to none where she had been, but everyone in the parish held that she had visited the soul of her dead husband in purgatory.\*

On All Souls' Eve dishes of cream are set out for the dead upon the table, for the souls are supposed then to revisit their old homes, and expect a meal.

But not only does the Breton think that the *anon*, the dead, wanders at will, but there are few who have not

\* *Pâque d'Islande*. Paris, Levy, 1897.



seen the *Ankou*, Death itself, or heard Death's coach travelling over the roads picking up souls on its way.

The Bretons will spend whole nights at the graves of their kinsmen, and pour over them libations of milk.\* If some article be lost, a Breton places a small coin on the grave of an ancestor, with the request that he will prowl about at night in quest of it. If a peasant desires to be roused early in the morning, he leaves word with his dead kinsman, sure that the ghost will awake him at the proper hour.†

The graveyard is as truly the centre of the *commune* as the dolmen was of the prehistoric tribe. The dead who lie there are by no means cut off from the world; the voices of the living reach them in muffled tones; they know that they are not forgotten; they are associated with every event of importance in the family. Nowhere else, and at no period, have people lived in such familiarity with Death. The consciousness of the presence of the dead never leaves the people. The evening of a wedding is like a funeral wake. The betrothed meet at the graves of their dead, and seal their vows over the tombs. It is but of quite recent times that the association of the departed with the affairs of the living has become less intimate. The *baosalan* charged with soliciting the hand of a young girl of her parents, on having received their consent, betook himself to the ossuary, to the bones of the kinsmen, and solicited their concurrence.‡

\* CAMBRY, *Voyage dans Le Finistère*, ed. 1836, p. 128.

† *Ibid.*, p. 173.

‡ LE GOFFIC (C.), *Sur la Côte*, Paris, 1897, p. 70.

In the Isle of Sein the evening salutation is not *Bon soir*, but "Joy to the souls!"

One of the most curious relics of paganism in the country is the so-called Venus of Quinipili. This is a statue of a nude female, that stood on a grassy mound. Sick people were brought to it. The palsied, those suffering from gout or rheumatism, rubbed their limbs against the image, and made offerings to it. A large basin scooped out in granite stood near it, and in this women who had been confined were wont to bathe. Unmarried girls presented gifts to the image to obtain husbands. In 1668 Count Pierre de Lannion, who had built a castle at Quinipili, transferred the idol to the court of his château as a suitable ornament, but as it was not a little indecent, he set a sculptor to make it more respectable.

The image is 6 feet 6 inches high. It is entirely nude with the exception of a band about the head and a sort of stole that falls from the neck half-way down the thighs. The figure is erect, the legs engaged in the block out of which it is carved; the arms are bent at a right angle and the hands are laid on the belly, one above the other. The eyes are feebly indicated, the nose is flat, and the mouth marked by a line.

The cult of this idol continued through the Middle Ages, and the clergy in vain thundered against the indecent rites offered before it. In 1660 the Bishop of Vannes ordered that the idol should be destroyed. Next year a mission was held at Baud, not far distant, and at the request of the missionaries, Claude, Count

of Lannion, had the statue rolled down into the river and a cross erected on the mound where it had stood. That year of 1661 no rain fell, and the corn crop failed. The peasants declared that this was due to the dishonour done to "Er Groach Houard," the Old Woman of Couarde.

In 1664 the statue was dragged out of the river by oxen harnessed to it, and it was laid on the bank. It had been somewhat injured by its fall, and by hammers which had broken the cheeks and breasts, when thrown down and defaced at the request of the clergy. In its prostrate and mutilated condition it continued to receive the cult it had been given previously for some years. The Bishop of Vannes again intervened, in 1670, and entreated the Count of Lannion to have it smashed to pieces. He sent workmen to break it. They knocked off one of the arms and a breast, and then rolled it back into the river Blavet.

In 1696 Pierre, son of Claude de Lannion, had it fished up again to ornament his new castle. He had it recut and placed on a pedestal, on which were engraved pseudo-classic inscriptions, asserting that this was the Armorican Venus which Julius Cæsar had erected in fulfilment of a vow.

The peasants, indignant at having their idol removed and shut up in a seigneurial castle, invoked the aid of the Duc de Rohan to institute legal proceedings against the Count, but the latter gained the case after a process that lasted three years and concluded in 1701. But this did not satisfy the devotees of the image. Repeatedly they broke by force into the

castle to pay their homage to the idol and solicit its assistance. Ogée in 1773 assures us that at that time oblations of money continued to be offered to this Armorican Venus.

The statue still stands on the site where placed in 1696; if it receives homage still, this is done in profound secrecy.

“One must always insist on this,” says an acute observer, speaking of Catholic Brittany, “the people have remained pagans to the marrow of their bones. The religious sentiment is there; but under the name of religion one must not imagine a creed, a connected system of doctrine, clear and precise, but an extraordinary jumble of rites and formulas and ceremonial usages, badly enchained, and these as ancient as the race itself.” \*

This is only to some extent true; one thing has been left out of sight in this stricture passed on this religious people. Christianity—that is, Christian morality—has steeped their lives in its principles. There is drunkenness; it is almost their only vice. Their religion has made them honest, God-fearing, tender-hearted, and leading pure lives. They have assimilated the morality of the gospel if they have got but a confused notion of its doctrines.

\* LE GOFFIC, *op. cit.*, p. 160.





PEASANT OF LOCRONAN

## CHAPTER III

# THE HISTORY OF BRITTANY

Necessity for knowing something of Breton history—The British immigrants—The kingdoms formed—Conmore—Nominœ—Constitutes the independence of Brittany, civil and ecclesiastical—Solomon—Ravages of the Northmen—English invited to interfere—Jean de Montfort—Charles de Blois—The war of succession—The Companies—The Battle of Thirty—Bertrand du Guesclin—The Duchess Anne—Brittany becomes a province of France—Fusion—Succession of dukes.

TO get an idea of the conformation of a district and the flow of the rivers, it is expedient to ascend elevated points, whence a panorama of the land may be obtained. It is impossible in the brief space of a chapter to give more than a general conception of the history of the duchy or kingdom of Brittany; yet without a comprehensive survey the visitor cannot properly appreciate what he sees, nor will the reader of this book know where to place the several historic episodes that occur in the description of the several localities.

One looks on a face, and that face at once acquires an interest in our eyes if it bear the traces of some great sorrow that has swept over the past life, giving to it sweetness and strength. And so is it with towns. They acquire at once an attraction when

we can discern in them the traces of history, the impress of sore distresses, perhaps of glorious achievements.

I will take a few salient features of Breton history and indicate the lines of connection, so as to enable the reader to obtain something of historic perspective.

As has been already said, Armorica was occupied during the fifth and sixth centuries by successive swarms of immigrants from Britain, who brought over with them their own language, institutions, and ecclesiastical as well as secular organisations. These colonists succeeded in changing the appellation of the peninsula from Armorica to Lesser Britain, and in totally changing the language spoken therein, and impressing upon the natives their own tongue, which was identical with that spoken in Wales and Cornwall.

At first the new settlers recognised their dependence on the princes of the mother country,\* but this attachment relaxed, and very speedily two Breton kingdoms were constituted, that of Domnonia and that of Cornubia, or Cornouailles. The former comprised the whole of the north coast from the Couesnon to the western sea, and was bounded on the south by that chain of mountains that runs from Montauban to Bourbriac, and thence continues as the Monts d'Arrée to the sea above Brest. The south-western coast land constituted the kingdom of Cornouaille to the river Ellé.

\* "Fuit vir unus in Britannia ultra mare, nomine Rigaldus, qui in nostra primus venit citra mare habitare provincia, *qui dux fuit Britonum ultra et citra mare usque ad mortem.*" *Vita Sti. Leonori.*



The interior of the peninsula was occupied by the vast forest of Brecilien. The early history is so perplexed that I shall not trouble the reader with it till we arrive at the time of Jonas, King of Domnonia, who died in 540. He left an only son, a boy Judual; and Conmore, Count of Poher,† who married the widow of Jonas, undertook the charge of the young prince, and the regency during his minority. He was an ambitious man, and his wife suspected that he had designs on the life of her son. She accordingly sent him to the court of Childebert, at Paris, where he was retained in surveillance. About the year 550 S. Samson appeared at Dol, ostensibly to found a monastery there, but actually to organise an insurrection against Conmore. He went ever and anon to Jersey, where he drilled soldiers; and he sent his monks about Domnonia to incite to rebellion. Then he visited Paris, and with difficulty induced Childebert to release Judual. When all was ripe the Bretons rose against the usurper, who was defeated in three battles, and was killed in 555.

The history of Brittany continued to be one of fratricidal conflict and slaughter from generation to generation. According to Celtic custom every principality was broken up into separate portions for every son of a king on that king's death; and then the most masterful of the heirs cut the throats of his brethren, unless they succeeded in putting the sea between themselves and him. Usually they took refuge in Wales or Cornwall.

† Poher is the basin between the Monts d'Arrée and the Montagnes Noir.

At last Nominoe, a very remarkable man, who had been invested with the lieutenancy of Brittany by Louis the Pious, in 826, resolved on shaking off the Frank yoke and establishing the independence of his country. He remained faithful to the Frank emperor so long as Louis lived, but on his death, seeing that the empire was crumbling to pieces, and that the desired opportunity had come, he raised the standard of revolt. He was warmly seconded by S. Convoyon, Abbot of Redon. Louis had been succeeded by Charles the Bald in 840, who had inherited the crown of Charlemagne, but none of his abilities.

In 845 the preparations of Nominoe were complete, and in a series of battles, in which he was uniformly successful, he achieved his purpose. He further drove the Franks out of Nantes and Rennes, and definitely united these counties to Brittany. He did more. He repelled the Northmen who had descended on and were ravaging the country.

Having established himself supreme, he reorganised Brittany ecclesiastically into seven dioceses, whereof Dol was one, which he erected into an archbishopric, with jurisdiction over the six suffragan sees, and then was crowned king. Nominoe died in 851.

His eldest son was Erispoe, who inherited the crown, and continued the work of his father, repelled Charles the Bald, who made a new attempt to recover Brittany, and was likewise successful against the Northmen.

Nominoe had left two other sons, Gurwan and Pasquiten, and a nephew, Solomon.

This latter assassinated his cousin Erispoe before the altar of the church of Penpont, and assumed the crown. He proceeded to buy off the Northmen, and promise a tribute to Charles the Bald.

But although Solomon had gained the object of his ambition, his conscience troubled him on account of his sacrilege and murder, and he sent a deputation to Rome to buy his absolution.

Now the Archbishop of Tours had claimed jurisdiction over Brittany, a jurisdiction that had only been acknowledged by Nantes, Rennes, and Vannes ; and the Pope viewed with a jealous eye the attempt of Nominoe to establish a Breton Church on independent lines. He accordingly agreed to absolve Solomon at the price of undoing the ecclesiastical organisation of his uncle Nominoe. To this Solomon, caring only for his own soul, readily consented. But the Bretons were by no means disposed to have Nominoe's work destroyed, and they rose in revolt under Pasquien, the son of the late king ; and Solomon, finding himself deserted on all hands, fled with his son for refuge to a church, out of which he and the boy were dragged and both killed (874). For some unaccountable reason the Bretons have regarded this despicable assassin as a saint. His violent death has been taken to have expiated his crime and his betrayal of the national liberties.

The death of Solomon was the signal for the division of Brittany, and for internecine strife, in the midst of which the northern rovers recommenced their ravages, which they carried on unmolested, as there was no central authority to oppose them.

The desolation became so general, and the misery and insecurity so great, that many Bretons, together with Mathuedoi, Count of Poher, escaped to England and threw themselves on the protection of Athelstan.

But in 937 Alan Barbetorte, son of Mathuedoi, returned, and carried on a successful campaign against the Northmen, whom he defeated and put to the sword.

The history of Brittany continued to be one of sanguinary internal strife, alternating with fights against the Normans, until the reign of Conan III. (1112-48). Conan had married Matilda, daughter of Henry I. of England, and had by her two children, Hoel and Bertha. Suspecting his wife of infidelity, on his death-bed he protested that Hoel was no son of his. Bertha, by her first husband, had a son, Conan, who rose in revolt against his stepfather. One part of Brittany acknowledged Conan, another recognised Eudo de Pornhoet, the husband of Bertha. Conan summoned Henry II. of England to his aid, and to secure his assistance gave his infant daughter Constance to Geoffrey Plantagenet, the son of the English king.

This was the beginning of that continuous series of civil wars in which the English took part, and which lasted from the close of the twelfth century to that of the fifteenth—three hundred years, during which the English burnt and ravaged Brittany on one pretext after another.

Constance was the mother of Arthur, who was killed by our King John in 1203.

The despicable Conan IV. abdicated in 1166, and

consigned his duchy to Henry II. The English king got hold of Alix, daughter of Eudo and Bertha, outraged her, and the girl died of shame the same day. This roused all Brittany into a fury of resentment, and Henry carried everywhere fire and steel. After his death the unhappy duchy was frightfully maltreated by Richard, misnamed the lion-hearted, but who really had the heart of a tiger.

The miserable history of strife and bloodshed continued. We must pass on to the death of Alan II., in 1312. He had been twice married. By his first wife he had three sons, John III., who succeeded him; Guy, Count of Penthievre; and Peter, who died childless. By his second wife, daughter of Robert of Dreux, Countess of Montfort, he had one son and five daughters. The son was Jean de Montfort. The name must not be forgotten. It was to be of terrible import to Brittany.

John III. died in 1341 without issue. His two brothers, Guy and Peter, had predeceased him, but Guy left an only daughter, Jeanne, who was married to Charles de Blois, nephew of Philip V. of France. John III. bequeathed his rights to this niece, with disregard to the claims of Jean de Montfort, his nephew.

No sooner was he dead than an explosion ensued.

From 1341 to 1365, that is to say, for four-and-twenty years, the soil of Brittany was trampled by contending forces and drenched with blood. The pretenders to the ducal crown were of the same age, and both belonged to the same house; both bore the same arms, and had the same battle-cry. The

soldiers engaged on both sides were of the same country, and spoke the same language. Families were divided, and fought in opposed armies. Jean de Montfort was a brave, handsome, and chivalrous hero; Charles de Blois a model of narrow piety, a saint according to a perverted conception. Turn and turn about each was prisoner to the other; each one day wore the crown, and the next the manacles. If the Bretons had been suffered to settle their differences by themselves, they would speedily have reached a solution; but behind the parties stood France on one side, England on the other. Charles de Blois had at his back Philip de Valois and France, and behind Jean de Montfort was Edward III. of England.

The conflict began with a disaster for the latter. The Duke of Normandy (afterwards John II.) at the head of 10,000 men surrounded Nantes, in which was Montfort. A conflict of a hundred knights on each side was proposed and accepted, and took place outside the walls. The Bretons fared worst; all were killed except thirty. The Duke of Normandy ordered these to be decapitated, and their heads to be flung over the walls into the town. This barbarous proceeding produced such a panic in the city that the gates were thrown open, and Jean de Montfort became a prisoner.

But his cause was not irretrievably lost, for his heroic wife, Jeanne of Flanders, had the courage of an Amazon, and at her entreaty Edward of England promised his assistance. She confided to his charge her little son, Jean, to be fostered away from the

risks of civil war. The story of the two sieges of Hennebon shall be told later on in this book.

Charles de Blois was as great a contrast as might well be discovered to the gallant Jean de Montfort.

He always moved hung about with rosaries, relics, and scapularies. Every day he recited the Hours of the Blessed Virgin and the Office of the Cross. He delayed military operations of the utmost importance till he had gone through his devotional routine. He fasted on bread and water two days in the week, and wore sackcloth next his skin, and three horse-hair cords twisted and knotted about his body. He literally swarmed with vermin.\* He put pebbles between his toes and under his soles. He scourged himself every Friday with a spiked cat-o'-nine-tails, and belaboured his breast with his fists till it was black and blue. In such weighty matters as truthfulness, chastity, and humanity he left much to be desired.

This objectionable personage was as lacking in military ability as in manly virtues, and his affairs would have gone hopelessly wrong had he not been assisted by men of some knowledge of the art of war—notably Don Luis of Spain, who was as cruel as he was skilled. Luis took Conquet, and put the whole garrison to the sword. Guingamp suffered the same fate. Guerande was delivered over to the soldiers for indiscriminate massacre.

When Charles himself took Quimper he suffered his men to butcher fourteen hundred of the inhabitants of both sexes and of every age, whilst he was

\* Et ibi erant tot pediculi quot pietas erat videri.—*Oliv. de Bingnon.*

himself mumbling his prayers. At last his chaplain, disgusted at the slaughter, rushed to him into the church, carrying in his arms a poor babe that he had saved from being tossed on the pikes of the soldiers, and insisted on Charles interrupting his orisons to stay the carnage.

On the taking of a town, the only stipulation that Charles made with his troops was that they should respect the churches and the property of ecclesiastics. To him the honour of virgins, the lives of brave men, were naught.

Presently Jean de Montfort managed to escape from prison, but the harsh treatment he had undergone had sapped his health, and he died at Hennebon in 1345.

The expiring prince named Edward III. guardian of his son, and the English king poured a large army into Brittany, as well as elsewhere in France.

The battle of Crécy ensued, whilst the Earl of Northampton was traversing Brittany and taking one stronghold after another.

The Earl was succeeded by Thomas Dagworth. La Roche Derrien had fallen into English hands. Charles de Blois attempted to retake it, and was completely routed, and himself taken prisoner (June 18th, 1347) and sent to England, where he remained in captivity for nearly twenty years.

The war went on between the two Jeannes, the widow of De Montfort and the grass-widow of Charles.

Brittany now became a prey to the "Companies," bands of freebooters under redoubted cap-



tains who lived on the plunder of the land, and who passed without scruple from one side to the other, as best served their ends.

It was during this period that occurred the Battle of the Thirty. The combat was proposed by Robert de Beaumanoir, Governor of Josselin for Charles of Blois, and the English Captain Bramber or Brambourg, Commander of Ploermel for De Montfort and King Edward.

It was agreed between them that thirty knights on each side should meet at the oak of Mivoie between the two places.

Bramber is said to have had only twenty English available, and to have completed his number with Flemings and Bretons, but judging by the names of those on his side, there were only four Englishmen, Robert Knollys, Thomelin Walton, Hugh Calverley, and a Dagworth. The rest were Gascons, Flemings, Bretons, and Norman-French.

The victory was with the French.

The war continued, and France was crushed under the heel of England. The defeat of Poitiers was more disastrous than that of Crécy, and it produced the captivity of King John and his two sons.

Towards the end of 1356 Charles de Blois recovered his liberty. He was suffered to return to France, but was obliged to leave his two sons as hostages, and to undertake to pay a heavy ransom.

At the same time the young De Montfort arrived on the scene with the Duke of Lancaster. The war was being handed on as a legacy from one generation to another.

But now arose a man who was to change the whole aspect of affairs—Bertrand du Guesclin, a man of real military genius, true patriotism, and of probity. Born at Broons, in or near 1320, his abilities brought him rapidly into notice.

But the battle of Auray was disastrous. It was fought on Michaelmas Day, 1364; Du Guesclin was taken prisoner, and Charles de Blois was killed, along with his bastard son.\*

The death of Charles, whose sons were hostages in England, brought some alleviation to the miseries of the duchy. Charles V. of France consented to acknowledge Jean de Montfort as duke, and he is known as John IV. of Brittany.

But peace was not of long duration. It lasted for five years only. Jean was English by education and sympathies, and when, in 1369, he opened his ports to the English fleets; and suffered English troops to march through his land to attack France, the Breton barons rose in revolt, took from him nearly all his fortresses, and compelled him to fly to England.

The death of the Black Prince and of Edward III. gave Charles V. an occasion for annexing Brittany to the French crown. This high-handed proceeding roused the anger of the Breton nobility, and they re-

\* Breton patriotism speedily elevated him to the number of the blessed, but he has never been canonised, though initiatory proceedings for his beatification were started. In 1368 Urban V. forbade the bishops of Brittany allowing him to be worshipped as a saint and martyr. Nevertheless, his name was inserted in 1731 in the Breviary of Blois, and he receives a cult to this day in Brittany, where he is rising into fashion. Regardless of his word, lax in his morals, indifferent to human suffering, he is a typical example of narrow hysterical piety.



ROOD SCREEN, LAMBALLE



called their duke, who now appeared as the champion of their native liberties and independence (1379). Du Guesclin, although a Breton by birth, did not swerve from his allegiance to the crown of France, and served under its lilies against the ermine of Brittany.

We must now pass over a century that was not without broils and bloodshed, in which the English were continuously associated.

Duke Francis II. died in 1488, leaving an only child, Anne, as his heiress. At once the unfortunate province became a prey to rival candidates for her hand—Maximilian of Austria; the *Sieur d'Albret*, supported by the English; the Duke of Orleans, backed up by his brother Charles VIII.; and the Viscount of Rohan.

The aspirants pursued their suit with the sword; desolation and slaughter were everywhere; and finally, to put a term to this internecine strife, and secure the duchy, Charles VIII. married Anne himself.

Charles was a repulsive object, with a big head and short legs, and with an unwholesome complexion. He was so badly educated that he could hardly read, was deficient in intelligence, and a creature who acted on caprice. Anne could only be induced to accept him at the urgent entreaty of the bishops and nobles of her duchy, and when she gave him her hand it was with averted face (December 6th, 1491). Thenceforth Brittany became a province of the realm of France.

Charles died in 1498 without issue, and at once

Anne retreated to her duchy, where she was received with enthusiasm.

Her widowhood was not of long duration. Some flimsy excuse was found to enable the Pope to annul the marriage of the new king, and then Louis XII. married the widow (January 7th, 1499).

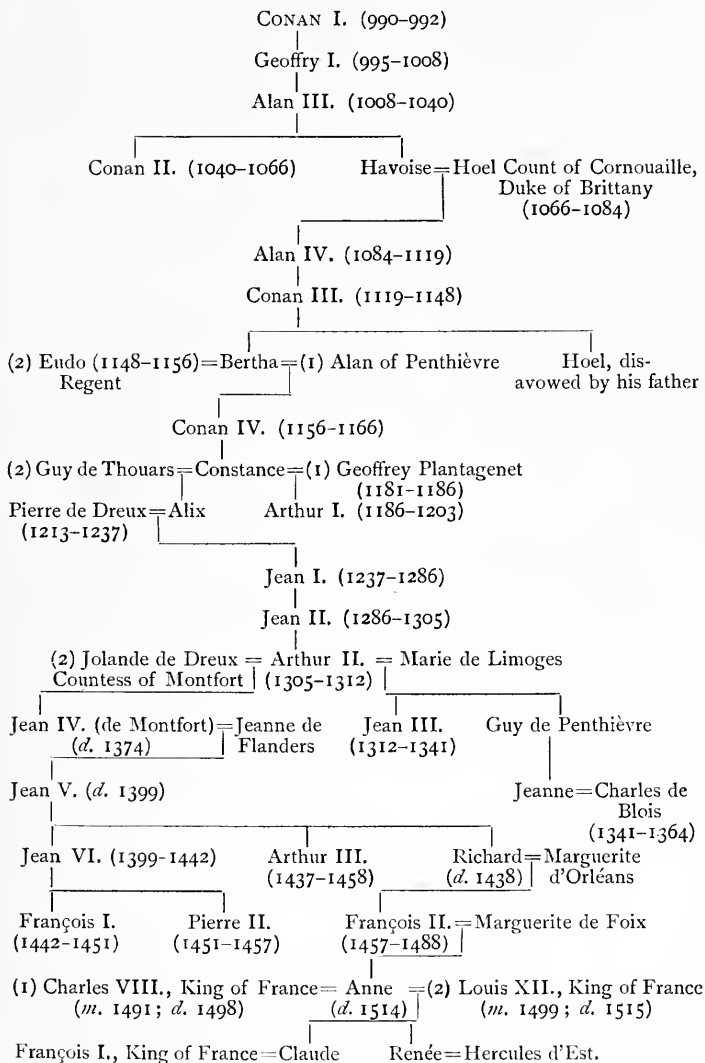
Thenceforth the history of Brittany is merged in that of France, and it is not necessary for me to give here in abstract what is generally known or easily obtainable elsewhere.

“The political fusion had taken place, but comprised no moral or administrative union. Centuries would have to elapse before Brittany could be brought to submit to French administration. It would protest by the voice of its estates, and again and again the people would rise whenever the attempt was made at unification, and its franchises and its customs were touched, above all, when a sacrilegious hand was laid on the Cross before which the entire population had bowed for fourteen hundred years. As to moral fusion, that is not as yet complete, at least in Lower Brittany, nor will it be until the railways have everywhere penetrated to the granite villages.” \*

\* PITRE-CHEVALIER, *La Bretagne Ancienne*, Paris, 1859, p. 469.

# THE DUKES OF BRITTANY 43

## THE DUKES OF BRITTANY



## CHAPTER IV

# ARCHITECTURE

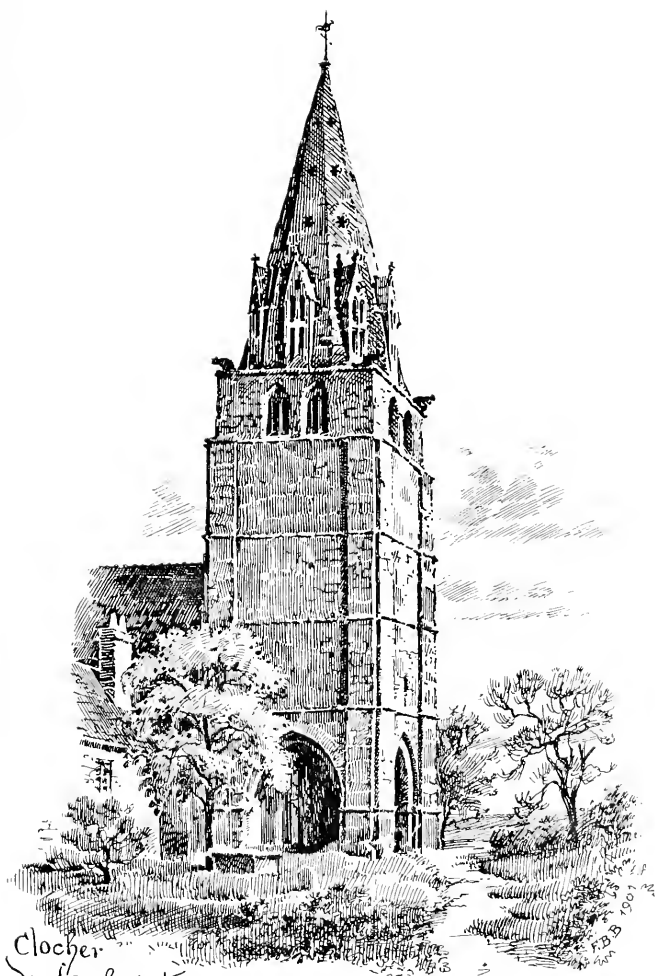
Advantage of a rudimentary knowledge of architectural styles—British monastery at Lavré—Carlovingian church at S. Philibert—The Norsemen—Romanesque architecture in the eleventh century—S. Sauveur, Dinan—Attempts at vaulting—The pointed arch—First Pointed style—Cost of glass—Notre Dame de Lamballe—Dol Cathedral—The Second Pointed or Geometrical style—The choir of Notre Dame de Lamballe—The compasses compress genius—The Third Pointed or Flamboyant style—The Renaissance—Its towers—Summary—Baroque style—The châteaux—Norman method of fortification—Flamboyant and Renaissance châteaux—The death of architectural beauty—Cottages.

ONLY second in interest to the people are the churches of Brittany, the shrines of their higher life, the pole to which every heart turns in every village.

It is in the church that the most beautiful thoughts, the most lofty ideas of the population, have been crystallised. The farm and the cottage have been the scenes of hard toil, but the church is the home of their spiritual nature.

To go through the province and not to be able to discriminate between architectural styles, and to estimate the approximate date of a building, or of its several parts, is to miss one great source of instruction and enjoyment.





Clocher  
de Lochrist.



I do not purpose in this chapter doing more than give the reader a few elementary rules for his guidance ; but I trust sufficient to put him in the way of continuing his studies as he wanders through the highways and byways of the land.

The early British settlers built their churches and habitations of wood ; or if of stone, then it was only of rude blocks put together without mortar. No such remains of early architecture exist in Brittany as are found in Ireland and the Western Isles of Scotland. But the foundations of a monastery may be traced in the Isle of Lavré, in the Bréhat Archipelago. They consist of a quadrangular oratory and a cluster of beehive cells, in all particulars the same as the Irish type of the fifth and sixth centuries.

The earliest remaining Christian church since the Frank conquest, built of stone and mortar, is to be found just without the confines of Brittany. It is at S. Philibert de Grandlieu, and this belongs to the Carolingian period. It was employed as parish church to the village, and was thickly cased in whitewash, covering its characteristic features. A few years ago the fancy took the parishioners to build a new church in a different spot, and to convert the old one into a market hall. In the process of adaptation to its new purpose the whitewash fell like a curtain, and revealed the original masonry.

This church was constructed before 819, but additions were made in 835. It consisted of a basilica with nave and side aisles, a great apse at the east end of the former, and lesser apses terminating the aisles. When in 835 the church was

lengthened, it was done by destroying these apses, constructing a large quadrangular space on their site, and by adding apses further east.

The building of both dates is of precisely the same character, a course of white limestone alternating with three of red brick. Of carved work there is none. The side aisles are separated from the nave by huge piers united by small semicircular arches, so small as to imply that the architects were timid in their employment of them. This is almost the sole example of a Carlovingian church that exists in France.

The incursions of the Northmen became so frequent and so vexatious in the latter part of the ninth and in the tenth centuries, that the monasteries were abandoned, and the monks fled, carrying with them the bones of their patrons, to walled cities in the centre of France; and some of the chiefs, together with large bodies of the people, escaped to England. Hardly any building, secular or ecclesiastical, was attempted in Brittany till the beginning of the eleventh century.\*

Now look at the sketch of an arcade in the church of S. Martin at Lamballe. It is somewhat similar to that of S. Philibert, excepting only the alternating bands of brick and stone, which are absent in Lamballe. Yet two centuries intervened between the building of one and of the other.

When the Bretons began to re-erect their churches

\* There are, however, a very early crypt at Lanmeur, and an early church with rude carvings at Locquéolé near Morlaix, both of the tenth century.

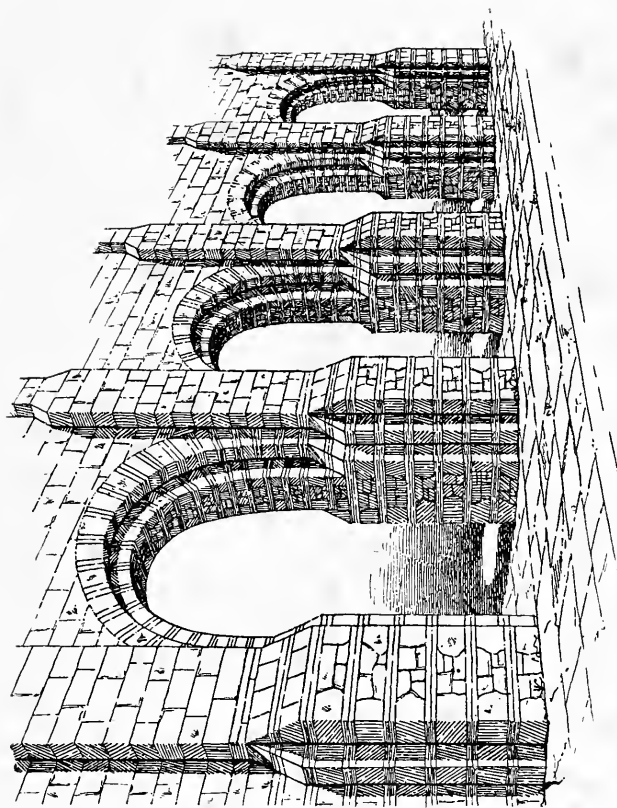


FIG. 2. ARCADE, S. PHILIBERT, GRANDLIEU

in the eleventh century, they started from the point where they had left off in the ninth.

But architecture now made rapid strides, and sculpture came to its aid. The inspiration was from Lombardy. It flourished with extraordinary

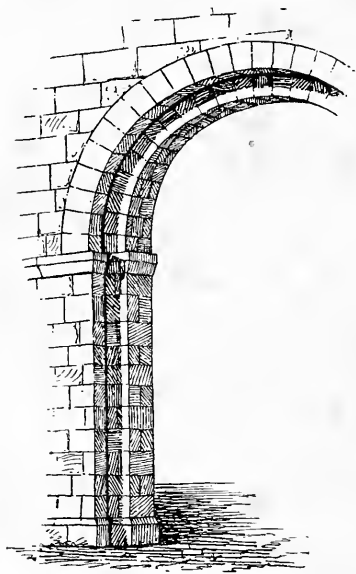
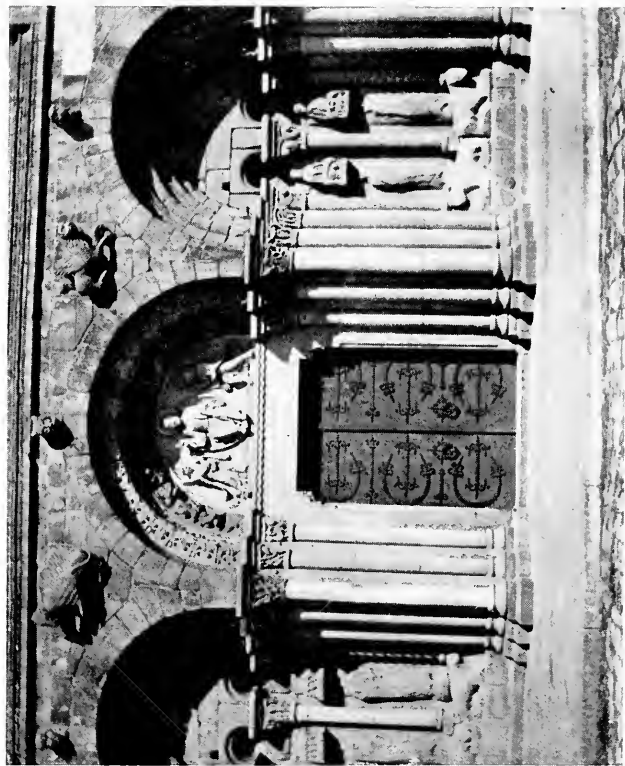


FIG. 3. ARCADE, S. MARTIN, LAMBALLE

luxuriance and with barbaric decoration in the centre of France, where the west fronts were turned into screens covered with rude but effective sculpture. Typical examples are Ste. Radegonde and Notre Dame at Poitiers.

But in Normandy the style was graver, more restrained, and statelier.





WEST FRONT, S. SAUVEUR, DINAN



Mrs. Alfred Gatty, in one of her "Parables of Nature," tells how that the domestic crickets when first created felt themselves to be lost creatures without a sphere in which to live; they roved over the face of the earth and shivered. But when men began to build houses, then they found the destination for which they had been created. The Northmen had been mere destroyers, wrecking all that was left of civilisation in Europe till they settled in Neustria. Then, almost at once, they found their true vocation, and developed rapidly into the master-builders of Europe. The sense of artistic beauty and structural strength planted in them had been in abeyance in their native land, where they had only wood with which to deal. But in Normandy, where the forests were sparse, and Caen stone was accessible, they laid hold of the pick and the trowel and created mediæval architecture, the most perfect in construction and in loveliness ever achieved by mankind.

Starting with the plain round arch, they rapidly improved on it; they added mouldings; they took the plain abacus and transformed it by the addition of sculpture.

The style they created is called by us, and rightly, the Norman; by the French *Romane* (Romanesque), because it had its cradle in Italy.

The examples in Brittany are not numerous, but the student may start on his rambles, with some acquaintance with it, by attentively noting the specimens that exist at Dinan.

The west front of S. Sauveur, below the window, which is later, is Romanesque. So is the south

wall of the nave, where engaged pilasters take the place of buttresses. So is the little chapel of S. Joachim, beyond the S. Malo gate. Observe therein the arch of the apse.

The ravages of war, fires caused by lightning or accident, made the builders desirous to protect from flames the altar and the relics under it. When the roof was of wood, not only was it consumed, but the falling masses of blazing timber destroyed what was beneath, and the architects began to vault the apse above the most sacred portion of the church. But the pressure of the vault on the walls obliged them to greatly thicken these latter. As yet the buttress was not understood, and the utmost done to strengthen the walls against the outward thrust was to engage piers or pillars in the wall.

For a while only did they content themselves with vaulting the apse. The next step was to treat the side aisles in the same way. It was long before they ventured on vaulting the nave, and it was when they attempted this that the buttress, and finally the flying buttress, came into use. This latter, however, not till comparatively late.

To enable the reader to follow the development of the buttress, I give a series of sketches, mainly from De Caumont, that exemplify it.

Fig. 4. San Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna, belongs to the later Empire. Here the outward thrust of the roof is resisted by mere thickenings of the wall in the form of an arcade.

Fig. 5. Here we have the buttress in a Romanesque building. It is nothing further than a thickening of

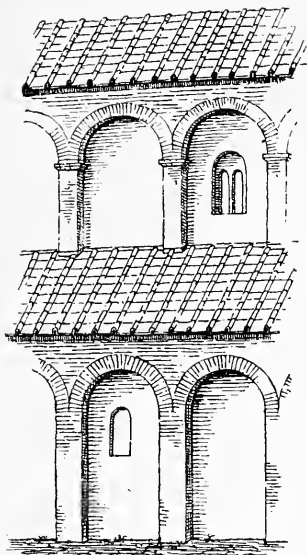


FIG. 4. BUTTRESS, RAVENNA

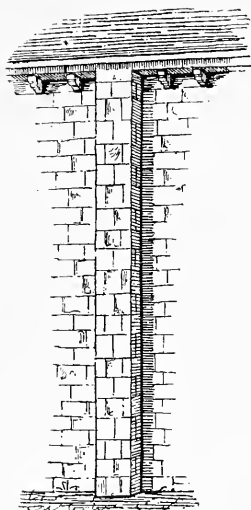


FIG. 5

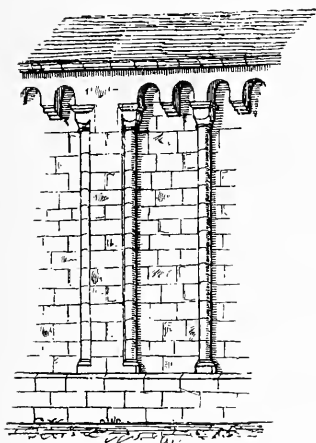


FIG. 6

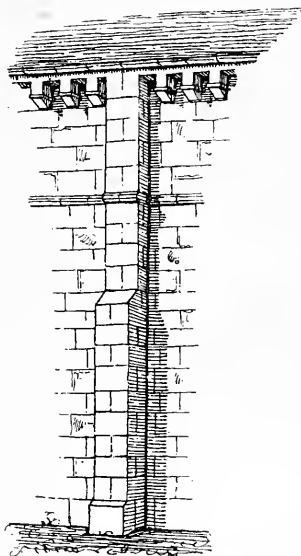


FIG. 7

the wall ; no advance has been made on the method adopted at Ravenna.

Fig. 6. In this example the buttress is decorated with pilasters, but still no progress has been made.

Fig. 7. Now an advance has been made. The true buttress shows itself, by a carrying down of the resistance.

Fig. 8. A further example of the true buttress.

Fig. 9. In the thirteenth century the buttress is in full course of development.

Fig. 10. To sustain a vaulted roof, the flying buttress takes its place. The example given is quite simple, but splendid representations of this stone scaffolding may be seen wherever there is an apse in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries.

Fig. 11. The degradation of the buttress ; from the apse of the Cathedral of Vannes, eighteenth century, where the true principle of the flying buttress is lost, and it is made weak where it should be strong.

In some instances the buttress is included within the church, the space between the several buttresses being utilised as side chapels. At Lamballe (Notre Dame) the substance of the buttress is elegantly pierced with tracery. At Guingamp the flying buttress daringly traverses the interior of the side aisles.

We will now leave the buttress, and consider the piers and arches within.

At first the arcade of the nave rested on oblong pillars that were rectangular. Again I give a series of examples ; this time I produce plans.

Fig. 12 represents the earliest plan of a pier.

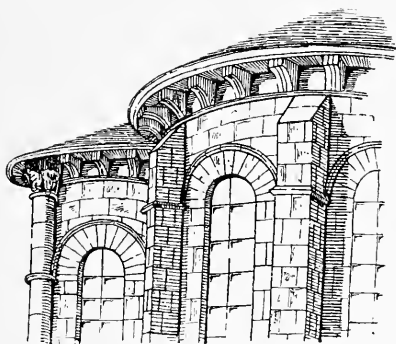


FIG. 8

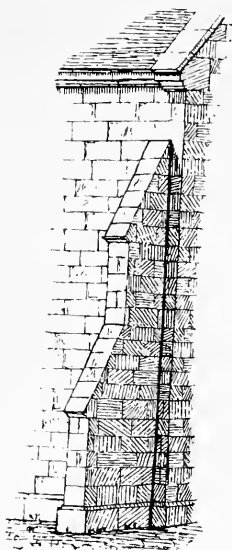


FIG. 9

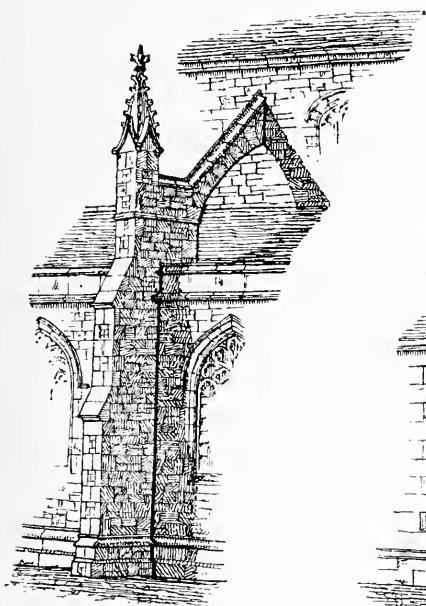


FIG. 10

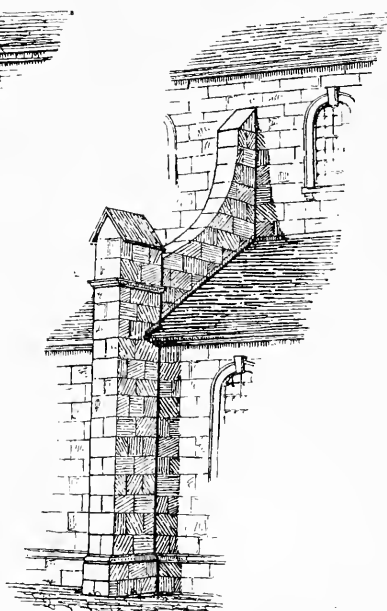


FIG. 11

Fig. 13 shows an improvement, an enrichment.

Fig. 14. Here we have pilasters engaged in the mass of the pier.

Fig. 15. The harsh angles of the central mass are removed, and the whole pier enriched. Every such enrichment of the pillars led to the enrichment at the same time of the arches that reposed upon them.

FIG. 12

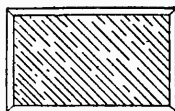


FIG. 13

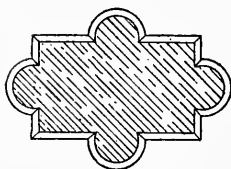
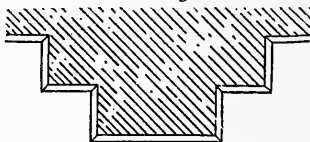


FIG. 14

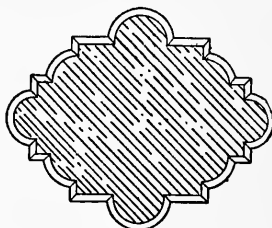


FIG. 15

SECTIONS OF PIERS

But even when round drums were employed in the place of rectangular piers, or their modifications, the arches were richly moulded.

At first the arches were semicircular, struck, that is, from a single centre (Fig. 16).

The second stage was the making of pointed arches. Whether the architects were forced to adopt the pointed arch by the stress of circumstances, when

constructing their vaults, or whether they hit on it by the interlacing of semicircular arches (Fig. 17), has

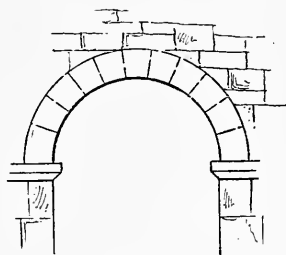


FIG. 16

been disputed, and we need not stay here to inquire. Sufficient for us that the next stage was the general adoption of the pointed arch; and with its adoption

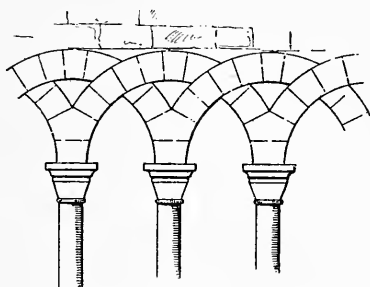


FIG. 17

we arrive at what is termed the First Pointed style (Fig. 18).

Arches were, indeed, still not infrequently round, but usually they were pointed, and when round we learn, as in the magnificent north doorway at Lam-

balle, to determine their period by the mouldings and foliage employed.

The First Pointed style began in the twelfth century and lasted to the beginning of the thirteenth.

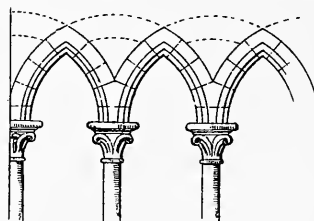


FIG. 18

We will now consider the windows.

In Romanesque churches there were only small round-headed windows, or else bull's-eyes.

With the twelfth century lancets (Fig. 19) were introduced, and these were sometimes grouped.

At the time glass was scarce and costly, and the windows were filled with wooden frames over which was strained oiled linen. Our English word *window* comes from the Scandinavian, and signifies a wind-eye, a hole through which the air poured in. Now, indeed, it was excluded, but glass came into use in the wealthiest churches. Its employment rapidly spread, and the art of staining it was acquired.

The architects were now able to widen their lancets, and make attempts at tracery. But this tracery was only tried in two-light windows, by including both lancets under a containing arch, and by piercing the space above them, and forming therein a circular window (Fig. 20).



I do not think that we can do better than take an object lesson at Lamballe. The chapel of the castle of the Counts of Penthièvre occupies a height above the town, and presents examples that are typical of all the styles of Pointed architecture.

The original church consisted of a quasi-cruciform structure, with a north entrance from the castle. Within, the nave has great drums of pillars with early First Pointed foliage of good character on the capitals, and with pointed arches, *i.e.* arches struck from two centres.

Now if we look at S. Martin's Church in Lamballe, we see a rude Romanesque nave, with semicircular arches, but east of these we have very early pointed arches of the second period, simpler than those at Notre Dame.

The architects of this period did not confine themselves to drums of pillars; they proceeded to surround them with clusters of slender shafts—in England frequently of Purbeck marble.

The church of Notre Dame de Lamballe was consecrated in 1220. By this date architecture was in rapid development, and the nave actually represents a stage that had already been left behind.

Now turn to Dol Cathedral. This had been burnt to the ground by King John in 1203. The rebuilding was commenced about 1220, and was continued to 1260. It is still in First Pointed, but in this style much developed since the nave of Lamballe was built. Here we have larger windows, because glass was now easily procurable, and clustered and disengaged columns surrounding the drums. Moreover, we have

here, what we have not at Lamballe, a pointed vaulted roof.

Now let us proceed further.

The architect, having discovered the pleasing effect of combining two lancets and piercing a circle above them, proceeded to group together three or more lights, reduce the intermediate spaces of stone to mere mullions, and to multiply the circles above.

At the west end of Lamballe (Notre Dame) may be seen a First Pointed window of the type Fig. 21. But in the south transept of S. Martin's Church is a typical Geometrical window of tracery of the newer style, which is called the Second Pointed or Geometric style (Fig. 24).

There is, moreover, a two-light window in Notre Dame that exhibits the pleasure taken by the architect in his newly acquired power of the employment of tracery in windows (Fig. 23).

The whole of the choir of this church was built under Charles de Blois, between 1353 and 1364, and is a magnificent example of this Second Pointed style. The richness of the clustering of the engaged columns that sustain the central tower, especially those to the east that had to resist the thrust of the vaulting, is not to be surpassed. There is a double triforium above the arcade and below the clerestory windows, and the choir is vaulted. On both sides the buttresses are taken into the church to form side chapels, but on the south side they are perforated and filled in with Geometrical tracery.

Tréguier Cathedral is in the same Second Pointed style, and some of its aisle windows are superb examples of the tracery of this period.

FIG. 19

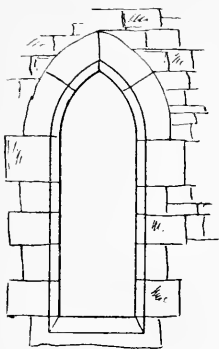


FIG. 20

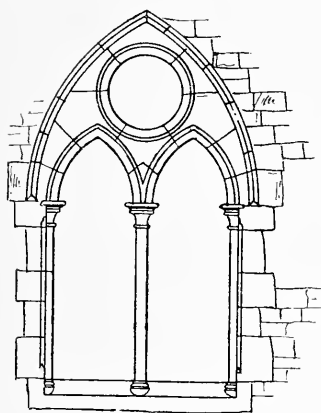
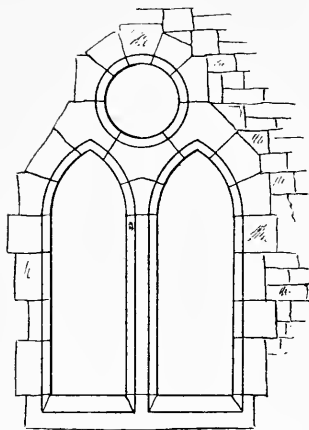


FIG. 21

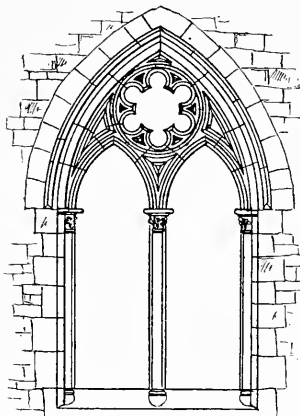


FIG. 22

This Second Pointed or Geometric style depends for its execution on a pair of compasses. Cologne, Amiens, York Minster, Lincoln, and Exeter belong to it.

Beautiful—the very flower of Gothic architecture—as it may be, yet it was a style that lent itself to be employed by second- and third-rate architects with respectable results.

The compass nipped genius. Any dull man who had a pair of dividers, Caen stone, and unlimited means at his disposal, could design an Amiens or a York Minster which would be perfectly correct, and show no spark of invention.

There is a fairy tale of the faithful servant, who when he lost his master bound an iron hoop about his heart. When he recovered his master, for joy his bosom swelled and snapped the iron ring. Something of the sort took place with the mediæval designer in stone. Genius strained within him till it broke through the circle, and it fell. In England, France, and Germany, almost if not quite simultaneously Geometrical tracery was cast aside. But the result was different in each land. In England the architect subordinated his art to that of the glass painter. He made of his churches vast lanterns, and turned the windows into frames for stained pictures of saints and angels. He originated the "Perpendicular" style, for his lines became vertical.

In Germany he allowed the circles to pierce one another, snapped them, and let the broken ends remain exposed. In France the tracery became leaf- or flame-shaped, waving, recurving, everything but

FIG. 23

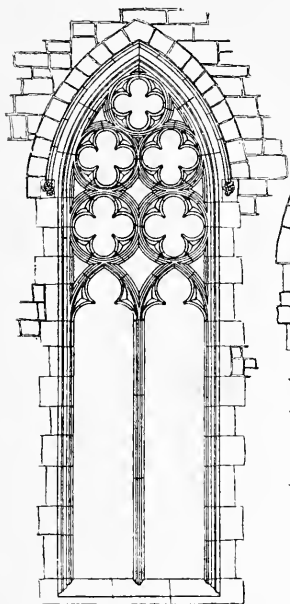


FIG. 24

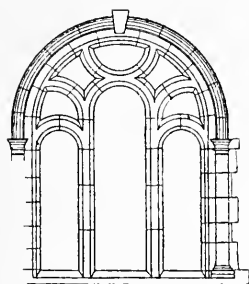
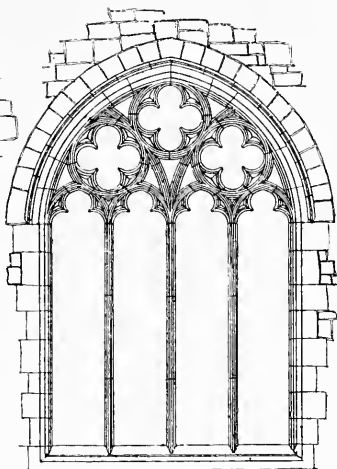


FIG. 26

RENAISSANCE WINDOW

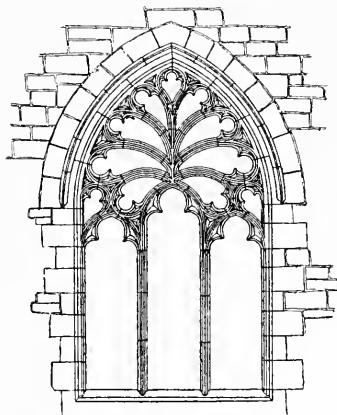


FIG. 25

FLAMBOYANT WINDOW

circular or rigid. Moreover, the architect in England and in France now conceived a fancy for striking his arches from four centres, two being often on the outside of his arch. In France the two-centred arch was still employed for the window-heads, yet doorways and arcading were frequently four-centred.

The designer was now emancipated from all restraint, and the Third Pointed or Flamboyant style shows the utmost luxuriance, even wantonness, in tracery and decoration. Flamboyant windows are often surpassingly rich and beautiful,\* but are also sometimes weak and weedy.

At Notre Dame de Lamballe the Third Pointed architect knocked away the First Pointed nave aisles, and put in gables to contain tall Flamboyant windows. The choir of S. Sauveur at Dinan, and the window above the west door, as also the north aisle of the nave, are of the Third Pointed period. So also is the church of S. Malo in the same town.

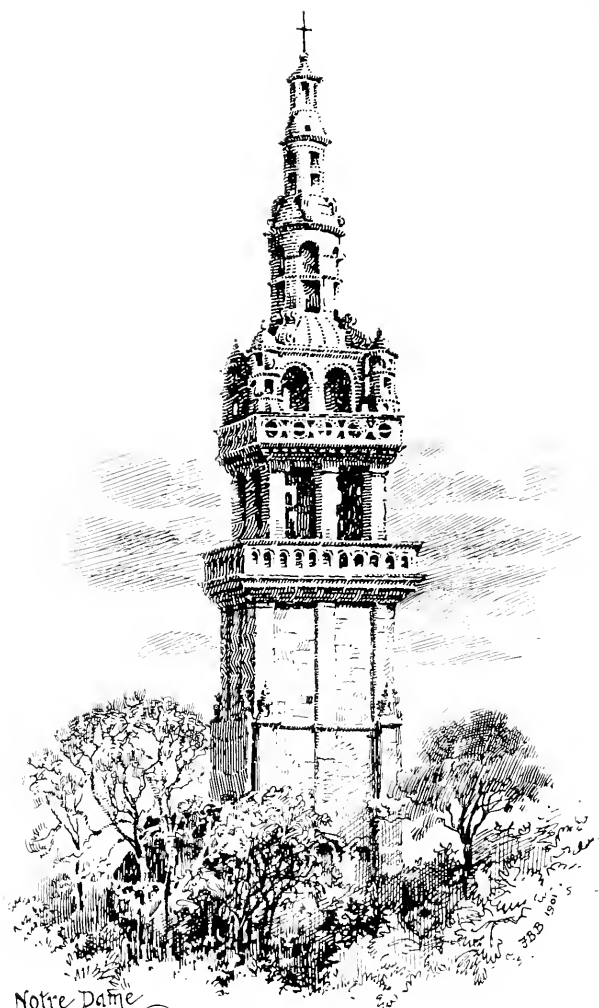
But the exuberance and extravagance of Flamboyant work produced a reaction. A desire was felt for something less frittering of outline and bolder in treatment of the windows.

At the same time came into France an influx of Italian artists, who made Italian presentation of classic pagan models the fashion of the day. But the Renaissance at first affected details only. Gothic forms in the larger features and outlines remained, and even the foliage continued to be that of the Flamboyant period.

In its early stage Renaissance buildings are very

\* The west window of York Minster shows Flamboyant feeling.





Notre Dame  
de Berven



beautiful, and some of the towers of this epoch are peculiarly fine, but the style rapidly deteriorated. Perhaps one of the most striking examples of a Renaissance church with all its adjuncts—triumphal arch into the churchyard, Calvary crowded with statues, and ossuary—is that of S. Thégonnec, in Finistère. The cumbrous triumphal arch is dated 1587, the beautiful ossuary is dated 1677, the Calvary 1610, and the church was built between 1563 and 1632. The ossuary is really the purest and earliest in style. The whole group is astonishing in the wealth of architecture crowded into a small space. The buttresses no more shoot up into pinnacles, but are surmounted by cupolas; pillars and pilasters are of classic character, and the arch meets in a heavy, enriched keystone. The niches for saints are surmounted by canopies that are wholly classic in detail though still Gothic in feeling.

The tendency in the towers is now to form pseudo-buttresses by reducing the walls between the angles, and boldly, heavily, even clumsily bracketing out the platform that supports the spire or cupola.

At Guingamp the south-west tower, never finished, is of this period, so is a large portion of the south front. Below are late flame-traceried windows, but above these in an upper stage others square-headed in pseudo-classic style.

A prejudice against tracery now manifested itself, and whensoever any had to be employed it was barbarous and uncouth to the last degree. In the church of Lannion we have almost side by side a Second Pointed window with circles in tracery,

a Flamboyant window of exaggerated character, and a Renaissance window in which the faculty of the artist to design tracery seems to have suffered paralysis (Fig. 26).

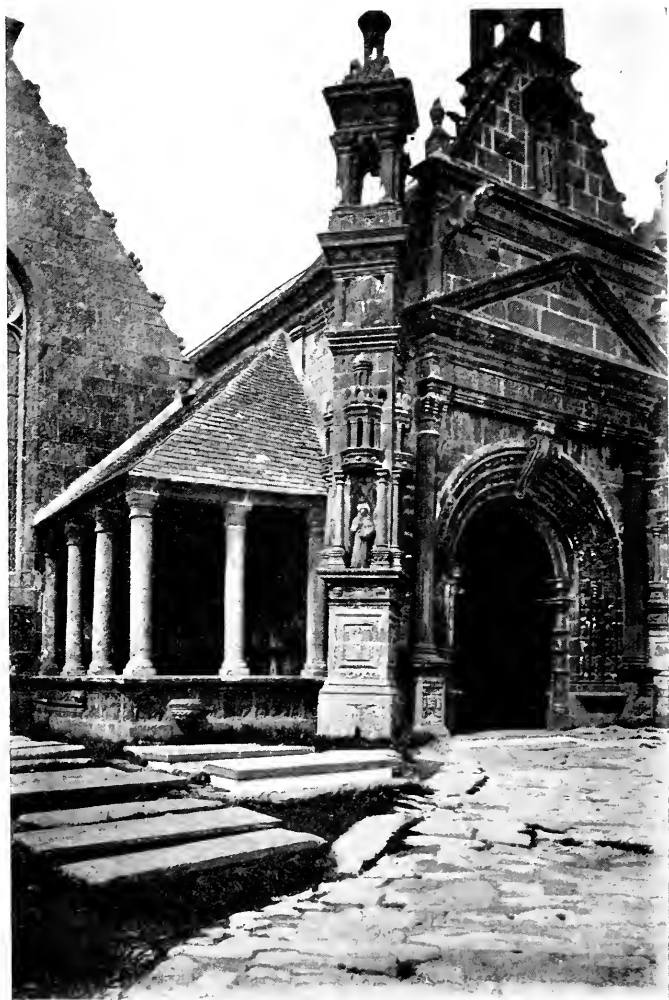
But although the architects of this later period were incapable in one direction, they were masters in another. In no part of Europe does architecture of this epoch present so instructive a study. Their spires and porches are of extraordinary richness and beauty. The type of spire changes greatly at this period. The Romanesque tower was usually central and square and massive. Then came in the use of bell towers at the west end, all on a square base; but the Renaissance architects affected an oblong quadrangular plan.

There would seem to have been a great school of architecture about the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries at Landerneau, that created the incomparable works of S. Houardon in that town and of several others in the neighbourhood.

The Flamboyant spires were a development of those of the preceding period, but the lantern-crowned towers of the Renaissance are designed in complete independence.

The earlier type of tower and spire consisted of one stage superposed on another, each crowned by a gallery on all sides. This was forced upon the Breton architects by circumstances. When, for century after century, the country was ravaged by the English and French, then the tower served as a look-out place, whence watch was kept by night

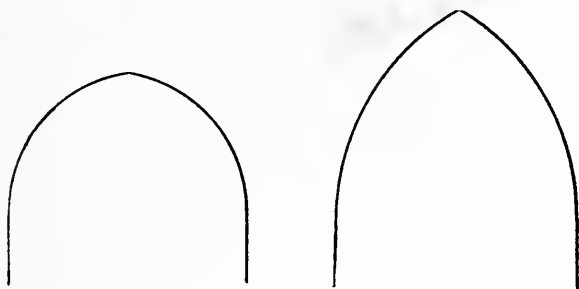




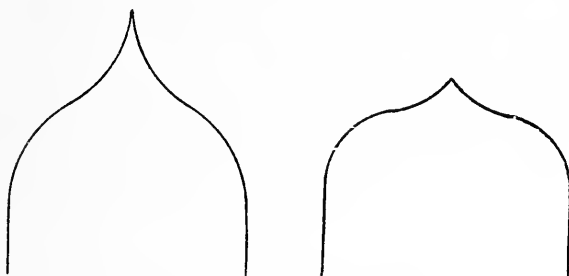
PORCH AND OSSUARY, GUIMILIAU. 1606

and by day against wandering Companies or hostile armies. The tower either terminates with a square head and a platform or in a series of galleries in stages.

Next to the towers we may note the porches as very original features, especially in the Renaissance



FIGS. 27, 28. TWO-CENTRED ARCHES



FIGS. 29, 30. FOUR-CENTRED ARCHES

period. The noblest of all are Landivisiau, 1554, and that at Landerneau, the date of which is 1604, and it is much like that of Bodilis, which is dated 1570; and those of Pleyben, 1588; Goulven, 1593; S. Thégonnec, 1599; Guimiliau, 1606; Tremaouézan, 1610-23; Goueznou, 1643, and some others even later.

The architects possessed the admirable Kersanton stone in which to work. This is dark and fine-grained; it cuts easily when taken from the quarries, but hardens with time.

The foliage of the several periods need not detain us long. Romanesque leaf-work is stiff and archaic.

That of First Pointed is leafage bursting with the breath of spring.

That of Second Pointed is foliage and flower in full summer.

That of Third Pointed is leafage crinkled and crisped with the touch of winter.

The periods may be roughly distinguished thus:—

Romanesque (round arches), eleventh century and beginning of twelfth.

First Pointed (two-centred arches and lancets), middle twelfth century and beginning of thirteenth.

Second Pointed (two-centred arches and Geometric tracery), middle thirteenth century and throughout fourteenth.

Third Pointed (four-centred, flame tracery), all fifteenth century and beginning of sixteenth.

Renaissance (round, poor tracery), end sixteenth century to middle of seventeenth.

Baroque (round, no tracery), middle seventeenth century to end of eighteenth.

To turn now to the châteaux.

The earliest fortress of stone known to exist in Brittany, and which probably belongs to the ninth century, is Castel-Cran in Plélauff, Côtes-du-Nord.





CHATEAU DE KERVOLET



Its plan is extremely simple; at the summit of a promontory on a natural platform is a castle, the shape of which is determined by the form of the headland it occupies. It is an irregular pentagon with a donjon in the south-west angle. The walls, about five feet thick, are very rudely constructed; the blocks of stone are uncut, and are bedded in clay instead of mortar. They now stand only six feet high.\*

But the Normans were the master-builders of castles as they were of churches. The type adopted by them became permanent for three centuries. It consists in drums of towers connected by curtain walls, and the towers in later days were usually capped with conical slate roofs.

Brittany does not possess many large castles, none comparable to those in Touraine, but it has Josselin and Clisson. There are, however, a good many of the same type on a smaller scale, as Combourg, Vitré, Sucinio, Tonquédec, and Elven.

But when the period of incessant or intermittent warfare was at an end, when Brittany became a province of France, there sprang up as by magic a crop of châteaux in the Flamboyant style, all beautiful, with their gables crocketed, with dormer windows, and with tall roofs.

When the Renaissance came, the châteaux continued to be beautiful, till that style became degraded to that type which seems everywhere in Europe to have been appropriated as suitable to pretentious

\* See M. Keranflech's account of it in the *Congrès de Saint-Servan* for 1891.

hotels. The details become coarse and the cornices and mouldings cumbrous. Every element of beauty is gone and every element of vulgarity is accentuated.

A Breton farmhouse or cottage deserves a word. It has struck me as structurally much resembling one such of the old type in Wales. A door between two windows, and of one story, and a chimney at one end. The interior has an earth floor, a huge fireplace for wood; the beds are arranged about the sides, and are closed in with carved wood fronts with little rails for the admission of light and air. The principal *lit-clos* has a small square exterior window opening into it. At night the members of the household retire into their closed beds, draw the doors together, and undress in privacy. So also do they dress in the morning in their box-beds, and open the doors and issue forth clothed. How, when, and where the washing is performed we need not inquire.

The great room is further furnished with large oak carved wardrobes and chests, and each *lit-clos* has a box like a small settee by it, on which to step so as to enter or leave bed.

NOTE.—An inaccuracy occurs in Figs. 23-26. I sent photographs and drawings to an architect to be drawn out in full for me. He was accustomed to Bath and Caen stone, and has accordingly composed the jambs and mullions of small blocks superposed; whereas, being in granite, they should be drawn in single blocks.





PARDON OF S. ANNE, FOUESNANT

## CHAPTER V

### THE PARDONS

What a pardon is—Displacement of local saints—The nature of a pardon—S. Jean du Doigt—Cult of relics—Pardon of Motreff—Of Guingamp—Sticking pins in images—S. Servais—Locronan—Irvillac—Plougastel—Fouesnant—The *pain bénit*—Its origin—Attempt of the Government to suppress or discourage religious observances—List of pardons.

IT is with some hesitation that I write upon the topic of the Breton pardons, for in them we see the intensely religious feeling of the people manifesting itself in its utmost intensity; and to assist at a pardon with covered head and clicking a kodak is to commit an impertinence and a sacrilege.

The pardon is to the Breton what a revival is to a Cornish Methodist and a camp-meeting to a Yorkshire Nonconformist. Religion, wherever found, and in whatever form it shows itself, is too sacred to be treated with contempt, or peered into inquisitively.

But the pardon is an institution too unique and too intimately bound up with Breton life to be passed over without notice. I trust that such as thrust themselves on one may leave their superciliousness behind them.

The pardon is the feast of the patron saint of a church or a chapel. It by no means is always

observed in the parish church; it is frequently celebrated in and about a lone oratory that is rarely visited at other times, and is unmarked in ordinary maps. The scene may be some woodland glen, or some barren moor, or an islet in the wild sea.

It is the wake, revel, or feast with all its mediæval features unaltered, hardly modified, and with the religious element intensified.

A little Breton almanack, annually published at Quimperlé, gives the days of the pardons throughout the year in Finistère and Morbihan.\*

The pardons begin in March and end in October, but the majority are between Easter and Michaelmas. When the feast day of the patron falls in winter the saint is only commemorated on that day, and the great celebration is transferred to a more congenial season. So also, when the patronal feasts of two parishes or chapels near each other occur close together, one has to be transferred. A good deal of effort has been made by the bishops and clergy of ultramontane tendency to efface the native and Celtic saints, and supplant them by such as are in the Roman calendar. For instance, at S. Aaron, near Lamballe, about twelve years ago, the very interesting early church, in which was much fine old glass, was ruthlessly swept away, and a vulgar Cockney-Gothic edifice run up and reconsecrated under the patronage of S. Sebastian and S. Aaron, and the village feast was transferred from the day of the founder, which is June 22nd (as he was a Welsh saint, and had not received the imprimatur of Rome), to the 20th

\* *Annuaire du Finistère, L'Union Agricole et Maritime.* Quimperle.

January, although that is in midwinter, merely for the sake of getting the people to pay their vows to the Roman saint in place of him who had been the apostle of the district and the founder of their church.

In the calendars of the Breton dioceses the process of elimination goes on. In that of the united dioceses of Tréguier and S. Brieuc for the present year (1901) not one Celtic saint is noticed in the months of January, February, June, July, August, September, and December. In March only one—Paul of Léon—is accepted: from April S. Brieuc could not with decency be excluded. The local saints in most favour are late, S. William and S. Ives. Charles of Bourbon, though not canonised, is rising rapidly in popular favour. On the other hand, the calendar is invaded by foreigners. Of Italians there are fourteen in January and February; whereas of early Breton saints there are but five admitted in the entire year.

In that striking story of Ferdinand Fabre, *L'Abbé Tigrane*, the Bishop of Formières is represented in his Grand Seminary turning out the professors as not sufficiently ultramontane to please him, and when the teachers murmur, he asks with what do they reproach him. "With what?" asks the Professor of Ecclesiastical History. "In your passion for reform you have not suffered us to commemorate our own local saints; you have abolished the Proper of the Diocese, one of the most ancient and most glorious of the martyrologies of France."

The Breton dioceses only abandoned their special rites and the Gallican Breviary in 1848, and accepted those of Rome.

To a pardon come pilgrims from all sides in their best costumes, which are only to be seen there and at a wedding. They proceed to their destination with the utmost gravity, their lips murmuring prayers and their eyes lowered. Beggars swarm, sordid, covered with vermin, exposing their sores, and fill the air with their whine. In the churchyard the young couples walk together solemnly, exchange a few words across a grave, and make their arrangements for life.

Le Goffic says: "These pardons are the same now that they were two hundred years ago, and nothing can be conceived more delightfully antiquated. They do not resemble other fêtes. They are not excuses for drunken debauches, like the Flemish kermess, nor the rendezvous of showmen like the Paris fairs. The attraction is something other and higher. These pardons are feasts of the soul. There is little laughing and much praying."\*

As a visitor remarked to a native, "Decidedly, I like your Bretons better when not amusing themselves. They are then less grave." The greater part of the day is spent in devotions; it begins with the early Mass; but the observance has actually commenced earlier, for the eve is devoted to confession, and the rosary is recited the whole way to the place of pardon. Some of the pilgrims have come barefooted, and such as intend to communicate are fasting. Indeed, there are not a few who return to their homes without having broken their fast. Mothers are there with infirm children in their arms.

\* *Les Romanciers d'aujourd'hui*, p. 87.



They dip the shirts of their babes in the holy well, and then put them on all dripping. Cripples plunge their distorted limbs in the blessed water, others pour it over their rheumatic joints or their open sores, and many are there scooping up the holy water to drink it as a cure to their internal maladies. There are processions of children in white, and flowers are strewn. Incense is wafted, candles flicker, and banners wave. Sermons are preached and hymns are sung. The priests who attend are saying mass at the altar from before daybreak.

A pardon that attracts crowds is celebrated at S. Jean du Doigt, near Morlaix, on the 23rd and 24th June. The story connected with it is as follows :—

By order of Julian the Apostate the body of the Baptist was burnt at Samaria, but a miraculous rain extinguished the fire, and some relics were saved. Among these was the forefinger of the right hand with which John had indicated Christ. This finger was sent to Philip, Patriarch of Jerusalem. Thula, a Normandy damsel, managed to get possession of it, and transported it to her native land, and built a church to contain it. Now it chanced, in 1437, that a young Breton of Plougasnou saw this relic, and resolved on stealing it. He found means of carrying out his intention, and to conceal the relic cut open his arm, and secreted the finger under his skin.

On reaching his native village he revealed what he had secured, and great was the joy of the people at having obtained so precious a relic. Duke John V. of Brittany in 1440 laid the foundation of the church

that was to receive it, and the beautiful Flamboyant structure was completed in 1513 by the liberality of the Duchess Anne.

The holy well is near the church. When the water is stirred with this relic it acquires miraculous powers ; it heals all manner of diseases, and the chapel is crowded with *ex-voto* tablets and thank-offerings for supposed cures. The finger is exposed to the adoration of pilgrims at the pardon ; the peasants believe that it still exudes blood, and that the nail is annually pared by the priests.

Formerly an angel was contrived to flutter down from the church spire and ignite the bonfire, but this has been discontinued. An angel, however, still executes this office at the pardon of S. Nicodème.

At Pouancé is la tombe de l'emigré. No one knows who the dead person is who is there buried, but the people insist on worshipping there, and surrounding it with *ex-votos*. At Chateaubriant is a skull, none can say of whom, which receives a religious cult. A withered corpse was dug up a few years ago at Eré, near Lifré, and vows are made to it, and it has become an object of devotion.

At Josselin, in the church of Notre Dame, on the right-hand side on entering, a Gothic niche contains a skull of some unknown personage, over which the faithful empty little bags of corn to preserve themselves from headaches. One can hardly doubt that this cult of old bones is a relic of primeval paganism, and represents the taking from the dolmens of bones and skulls to be scraped and fondled at certain festivals. The clergy have substituted relics of saints,

where possible, for those of ancestors. One of the most interesting of pardons is that of Locronan. The church there is crowded with very old and grotesque statues of native saints. Certain guilds or families have the charge of the several figures, and on the occasion of the pardon these are brought out by their hereditary custodians, who build for them little leafy bowers along the course of the *Tromenie*, or pilgrim path, at intervals, and the pilgrims as they go by salute them ; some drop *sous* as offerings, some kiss their feet, others may be seen throwing their arms round them and hugging them.

The pardon of Motreff has been described by Le Braz.\* The patron is S. Peter, and on the eve of the feast all the parishioners ascend to a bold mountain-top, where a great bonfire is built up by the head of a family in which the right is hereditary. The fire has to be lighted only by a pure virgin, and the sick and feeble are carried to the spot, as the bonfire flames are held to be gifted with miraculous healing powers. The parish priest is not suffered to bless the fire ; that must be done by the most ancient man of the village, who recites over it "The prayer of the fire."

When the flames are abated, and the ashes glow, then stones are placed around them for the souls of the dead to sit there through the remainder of the night and enjoy the heat. Every member of the community carries away a handful of ashes as a sovereign cure for sundry maladies. The whole proceeding is instinct with paganism.

\* *Pâques d'Islande*. Paris, 1897.

The pardons at which cattle are offered shall be described later on.

The pardons do not extend further east than Guingamp. There the great pardon is on the first Sunday in July. At nightfall dances take place in the street and *place* to the sound of the *biniau*. But at nine o'clock a procession leaves the church bearing the miraculous image of the Virgin, and it is carried to the square, where immense bonfires are lighted, and is taken round them. Immediately after midnight a mass is said, after which the pilgrims separate. To Guingamp many come from Upper Brittany.

There are still other peculiarities noticeable at Guingamp. In a side chapel is an image of S. Catherine. Unmarried girls resort to this statue and stick pins into it. If the saint shakes herself free from the pins during the night, that is a token that she has heard the prayers offered, and will obtain husbands for the girls who pricked her. The same superstition attaches to a statue of S. Guerec at Ploumanach.

One of the most remarkable pardons is now a thing of the past.

The pardon referred to was that of S. Servais in a fold of the mountains of Arré, on the fringe of the forest of Duault. It was formerly attended by from sixteen to seventeen thousand pilgrims from the dioceses of Tréguier, Quimper, and Vannes. Servais, who has become in Breton Gelvest, is invoked on behalf of the young corn. He guarantees against early frosts.

The pardon is on May 13th. On the eve, men and women were wont to arrive in troops, the men

all on horseback and armed with stout cudgels, with a leather looped thong at the small end, through which the hand was passed.

The following account of what the pardon consisted in is from the pen of an old countess who made the pilgrimage barefooted from Quimper on seven occasions.

"We started in numerous bands. As we approached the chapel we encountered the Gwenediz (the people of Vannes). These were our most implacable foes.

"Vespers was awaited by all ranged in two camps, the Gwenediz on one side of the stream that courses by the cemetery wall, and we on the other. Glances of acute hostility passed between the rival bodies. When the vesper-bell rang the chapel doors were thrown open, and we all rushed within.

"At the further end of the nave was a large banner, upright, the staff passed through a ring of the altar-rail. Hard by on a handbarrow was a little wooden saint, S. Gelvest ar Piliau. There had to be a new statue every year; one would not serve twice after the rough usage to which it was subjected.

"The *Magnificat* was chanted.

"Then all the cudgels were raised, and no sooner was the last verse sung than the whole church resounded with a frightful clashing of cudgels. The Cornouaillais yelled, 'Drive away the frost! Give us wheat in Cornouaille.' Whilst those of Vannes shouted, 'Drive away the frost! Wheat and oats and buckwheat to the Vannetais!'

"A stout fellow laid hold of the banner, the pole of which is eighteen feet high, and two others raised

the bier to which the image was attached. The rector of Duault advanced, pale as ashes, between the serried ranks of the Gwenediz on the left and the Cornouaillais on the right. The terrible moment had arrived. The banner was inclined to pass under the arch of the doorway.

"Suddenly a furious clamour burst forth, howls from thousands of mouths, '*Hijar reiu ! hijar reiu !* Down with the frost !' and at once the conflict with the cudgels began. They were flourished, whirled like the sails of windmills, they descended, clashed, and the rector with the choristers fled to the sacristy. The battle was fought to obtain possession of the banner and the wooden statuette, for the side that secured them secured also immunity from late frosts and an abundant harvest.

"The women were wont to fight as furiously as did the men, employing their nails and teeth.

"I remember especially one occasion on which the Cornouaillais were victorious. There had been a hurricane of blows, arms had been broken, and heads cut open. On the tombs without were men seated with blood streaming from their mouths. The saint had been smashed to atoms, and the women had collected the chips in their aprons. The banner alone was intact. The Vannetais made a last attempt to secure it. They were, however, successfully repulsed, and retired carrying off their wounded, who groaned in their pain as jolted in carts from the field of action. Our side carried off the banner in triumph to the church. That year, I well remember, the harvest was unusually abundant."

This pardon—at least in its violent scenes—is a thing of the past. Both the ecclesiastical and secular authorities interfered to abolish a scandalous usage that smacked too strongly of paganism. The gendarmes appeared on the scene, and the bloody pardon of Gelvest ar Piliau is at an end; but the old folks say that with its abolishment the fertility of the land has decreased. It could only be maintained by the annual shedding of blood.

One of the most noted pardons of Brittany is that of Locronan. The Grand Pardon occurs every sixth year, and the next will be in 1905. On this occasion the whole circuit of the *minihi* of S. Ronan is gone round by the pilgrims barefooted and reciting prayers. The distance is fourteen kilometres, but the Petit Pardon occurs every year, when a much more contracted circuit is made. The greater pardon is called the Grand Tromenie (round of the *minihi*), and takes place on the second Sunday of July and concludes on the following Sunday. The Petit Tromenie is on the last Sunday in September.

At Irvillac, in Finistère, is a curious pardon something like that described, in which fighting and broken heads form a part of the order of procedure. It is likewise in all probability a survival of a pagan feast. It is celebrated on the third Sunday in October.

At Plougastel, at the pardon on Midsummer Day, great fires are lighted, and the children are passed through or over them. Then the people kneel round the bonfire, and taking up the ashes, rub their eyes with them, after which they recite the Lord's Prayer

and the "Hail Mary." A curious example of an institution that was pagan, with a patch of Christianity applied to it.

At S. Eloi, near Landerneau, is a chapel that contains an image of the saint who is regarded through Finistère as the patron of horses. At the pardon, which is also celebrated with bonfires, the farmers arrive in procession on horseback, and as they pass before the image oblige their horses to execute a sort of stumble or bow, as offering salutation to S. Eloi. After that each offers at the altar a knot of horsehair.

There are peculiar features connected with many of the pardons that can only be ascertained by visiting them all, and this is not possible, as so many occur on the same days in the summer.

A very pretty pardon is that of Fouesnant, to which parties come in boats, bearing their banners, the girls all in white. But its beauty depends much on the arrival of the boats taking place at the flow of the tide. Much is lost when the boats cannot come into the bay.

A good many other peculiarities are found in the religious life of the Bretons, beside the pardons, that merit attention, and some of these shall be noticed later on in this book.

The *pain bénit* is very generally distributed at High Mass. This usage is still in force in the churches of Paris and in Normandy, but to the best of my knowledge not in other parts of the Western Church, though universal in the Eastern Church.

I have known English people startled at being



offered the bread during Mass, thinking that they were being communicated. This, however, is not the case, and a few words of explanation may not be out of place. In ancient days the congregation made oblation of the bread and wine required for the Eucharist, just as with us in England it has to be provided by the churchwardens. When received, the priest blessed the gifts, then took from the bread sufficient for the sacrifice, and gave what was over to be distributed among the congregation. This distribution in the Greek and Russian Churches is made at the end of the service, but in the north of France it takes place just after the offertory.

In the tenth century the Western Church, holding that at the institution unleavened bread was used, considered that it would be acting more in accordance with Scripture if it adopted the wafer. But the oblation of the leavened bread continued to be made by the people, and has also continued to be blessed and then distributed. The reason for it has, however, ceased with the adoption of the unleavened bread.

It is now cut up after benediction, and taken round in baskets. Formerly it was a token of fraternal love and regard for a bishop to send the *pain bénit* to one of his brethren, or to one of the faithful. In Paris S. Geneviève incurred much opposition, as she had instituted an ascetic mode of life, and the hostility towards her was only allayed when S. Germanus of Auxerre sent her the blessed bread.

I subjoin a list of some of the most notable pardons, but it must not be regarded as more than a selection;

and I take mainly those in Finistère, where they possess the most archaic and interesting character.

Steadily but surely, as French influence advances, peculiar customs are being abandoned. The Republican Government is employing all the means at its disposal to crush out or to undermine the religion of the people, and to secularise the education. Morbihan and the Côtes-du-Nord have been Gallicised, as have been Ille-et-Vilaine and Loire-Inférieure for some time, and though religion is still deep-seated and a dominant force, yet it is not an overpowering and all-embracing passion as it is in Finistère. It cannot be said that the Gallicising process and the driving back of religion advance honesty, sobriety, or morality generally.

It would not perhaps be incorrect, in drawing a comparison between the popular religion of the English peasantry and that of the Bretons, to call the former natural religion with a tincture of Christianity, and the latter Christianity with a smack of paganism.

Attempts have been made and are being made by Welsh Calvinist preachers to break down the religious convictions of the Bretons, but hitherto with little success.

The following is a by no means complete list of pardons. Those that are most interesting are in darker type; but it is not possible to indicate all that are especially curious without having attended every one. They differ somewhat the one from the other, and usually those most deserving of observation are such as are in remote districts and lonely chapels.

Monday in Easter Week	Plougastel-Daoulas at Les Fontaines blanches. Moncontour (C. du N.), some religion and much revelry and not a little drunkenness.
Tuesday „ „	Landevarzec.
1st Sunday after Easter	Trémeoc. Quéménéven (N. D. de Kergoat).
2nd „ „	Saint Yvi. Plonévez Porzay (N. D. de la Clarté).
3rd „ „	Audierne, Edern (S. Symphorien).
4th „ „	Le Cloître.
5th „ „	Beuzec-Cap-Sizun.
Sunday after May 11th	Loc Tudy.
Ascension Day . . .	Bodilis, Penhars, Spezet (at the Well of S. Gouzenou), Landevennec, Plougonnec.
Sun. after Ascension Day	Trégoat, S. Divy.
Whit Sunday . . .	<b>Kernilis.</b> Plouider; Edern; Coray; <b>Spezet</b> (Chapel of Cran).
„ Monday . . .	<b>Quimperlé</b> (Pardon des Oiseaux); <b>Pont l'Abbé</b> (Pardon des Enfants); Ergué-Armel, La Forêt, Landudal, Ploneis, Landeleau, Carantec.
„ Thursday . . .	Gouezec (Les Fontaines).
Trinity Sunday . . .	<b>Rumengol</b> ; Pleyben; Benodet; Plozevit; Ste. Anne d'Auray.
1st Sunday after Trinity	<b>Coadry</b> near <b>Scaer</b> ; Ploermel (M.); Benediction of the Sea at Camaret; Tréguennec; Plouedern; Plouzané.
2nd „ „	<b>Dirinon</b> ; <b>Trébabu</b> , Roscoff (P. de Santec).
1st Sunday in June . . .	Kerlouan; Ploujean.

June 7th . . . .	<b>S. Herbot</b> near <b>Huelgoet</b> .
Sunday after 17th June	<b>Lanhouarneau</b> .
Last Sunday in June .	<b>Ste. Barbe in Le Faouet</b> (M.).
June 24th and Sun. after	<b>S. Jean du Doigt</b> ; <b>Mespaul</b> ; Larmor in Ploemeur (with horse races). <b>Plougastel-Daoulas</b> (S. after June 24th).
1st Sunday in July .	<b>Meilars</b> ; <b>Goulien</b> ; <b>Plonéour</b> (N. D. de Bonnenouvelles); <b>Ploudalmezeau</b> ; <b>Landrilec</b> ; <b>Trégarvan</b> ; <b>Penmarc'h</b> ; <b>Plou-</b> <b>gastel S. Germain</b> ; <b>Guingamp</b> (night procession on Saturday evening).
2nd     "     "	<b>La Martyr</b> ; <b>Locronan</b> ; <b>Ros-</b> <b>porden</b> (N. D. des Fleurs); <b>Guilers</b> ; <b>Longuidec</b> (M.); <b>Landerneau</b> ; <b>Tréglonon</b> .
3rd     "     "	<b>Irvillac</b> ; <b>Plogoff</b> (N. D. de bon Voyage); <b>Collorec</b> .
4th     "     "	<b>Guerlesquin</b> (last three days); <b>La Roche</b> .
Last     "     "	<b>Sizun</b> ; <b>Dirinon</b> (Chapel of S. Divy); <b>Plomodiern</b> (Chapel of S. Sebastian); <b>Plonevez Porzay</b> (la Palue); <b>Châteauneuf</b> .
July 26th . . . .	<b>Ste. Anne</b> , <b>Ste. Anne d'Auray</b> .
1st Sunday in August	<b>Pleyben</b> (horse races); <b>Pléban-</b> <b>nalec</b> ; <b>Pouldreuzic</b> ; <b>Ploug-</b> <b>melin</b> ; <b>Huelgoët</b> ; <b>S. Nicodème</b> <b>in Plumeliau</b> (M.) (Cattle blessed; second day horse fair, and girls sell their tresses to hair merchants).
2nd     "     "	<b>Guiler</b> ; <b>Langolen</b> ; <b>Loc Tudy</b> ; <b>Plounéour-Menez</b> (du Relecq); <b>Berrien</b> .

3rd Sunday in August .	<b>Coat-é-Mal.</b>
4th       "       "	Pouldergat.
Last       "       "	<b>Chateauneuf</b> (P. des Portes); <b>Ploumodiarn</b> (on the Menez- hom).
Aug. 15th (the Assump- tion) and Sunday after	<b>Guern</b> ; Clohars; Carnoet; Fol- goët; Plonéour; Quéménéven (Kergoat); Beuzec-Cap-Sizun; Guipavas.
1st Sunday in September	Brasparts. <b>Folgoët.</b>
Sept. 3rd       .       .	<b>Belon</b> (near Pontaven), grand pro- cession. <b>Taulé</b> (at Peuzé); Bulat-Plestiven.
2nd Sun. in September	<b>Plouescat</b> (du Calvaire); <b>Ergué- Gaberic</b> (Chap. de Kerdevot); <b>Combrit</b> ; Porzay (N. D. de la Clarté); Lanbellec; Lagonna; Plozevet; Lanriec, Trémor- vézen in Nevez.
3rd       "       "	<b>Guissény</b> ; <b>Pleyben-Christ</b> ; Tré- gunc; S. Jean Trolimon.
4th       "       "	Laneufret; Lanrivoaré.
Last       "       "	Berhet (C. du N.); Beuzec-Conq; Brasparts (Chapel of S. Michel).
Sept. 14th and Sun. after	Plounevez-Lochrist.
" 16th       " nearest	Carnac (M.)
" Sunday after       .	Ploumelin.
" 25th       .       .	Gouesnach (Chapelle de S. Cadou).

In most cases it is necessary for the visitor to be at the place the day before, as pilgrims arrive on the eve, and often sleep in the churches, and the ceremonies begin at break of day. If accommodation cannot be had, drive over early from the nearest town. Secular festivities are after the religious commemorations.

## CHAPTER VI

### DINAN

Derivation of name—The fortifications and castle—Churches of S. Sauveur and S. Malo—The Place Du Guesclin—Combat there in 1357—Lehon—Foundation of the abbey—Stealing a body—Destruction—S. Jacut—The Mairie—Count de la Garaye—Château de Conninais—Menhir at S. Samson—Corseul—Tomb of an African mother—Dol—S. Samson—Dol made an archbishopric—A married archbishop—A boy elected—The architecture of the church—A Taurobolic monument—The forest of Coëtquen—The murdered marchioness—S. Malo and Aleth—René Duguay-Trouin—The sovereignty of the seas—Théodore Botrel.

DINAN takes its name from the *Dinas* or fortress that in Celtic times crowned the rock above the Rance, and occupied a tongue of land between that river and a lateral valley in which flows a confluent stream. The fastness was strong by nature, and required only a series of earthworks to the north against assailants from that quarter where alone vulnerable. In later times the town was fortified in the Norman fashion, with semicircular bastions connected by curtains, the walling pierced at intervals with gates. Of these there were four, but that of Brest has been of late years destroyed as interfering with the traffic.

The castle stands to the south-west. It was erected



S. SAUVEUR, DINAN





in 1382, and now serves as a prison, but will shortly be converted into a museum. In 1741 it served as a place of confinement for English soldiers, and these cut their names and initials in the walls. In 1793 forty priests were incarcerated therein, among them the curé of Lehon, who died there of ill-treatment.

The town possesses two fine churches, S. Sauveur and S. Malo. The former was originally a Romanesque structure, and a portion of the west front is in this style, as is also the south wall of the nave. The north wall was broken down early in the sixteenth century, and an arcade and side aisle were appended in the prevalent Flamboyant style; at the same time a noble choir was added with apse and a coronal of apsidal chapels, and with flying buttresses to sustain the vaulted roof. A central tower has a slate cap of great elegance and sound proportions. The original font of the church has been converted into a holy-water receptacle; it consists of a stone trough sustained by four figures of men, whose heads have unhappily been knocked off.

In the north transept is a monument that contains the heart of Du Guesclin, and in the north aisle is some ancient glass representing Breton saints.

The church of S. Malo, begun in 1490, is late Flamboyant throughout, except the south front of the transept; that is Renaissance. Flamboyant architects delighted in doing away with the capitals of pillars, and making their moulded arches grow out of round pillars without a break. This is the treatment in both the Dinan churches. It is most unusual in England, but occurs at Lostwithiel and Fowey.

The interior of the town contains some charming bits of street architecture, as does also the Rue de Jerzual that leads down to the port on the Rance. A few years ago it was possible to go from one end of Dinan to the other under cover, as the houses projected and the projecting chambers formed a piazza like those in Italian towns, and like the "rows" of Chester. But most of these have disappeared to make room for modern vulgarities. Nevertheless, sufficient remain to give a picturesque character to the town.

On the Place Du Guesclin occurred a memorable incident in the life of that Breton hero.

In 1357 the English, under the Duke of Lancaster, were besieging Rennes. Dinan was then in the possession of the French, and during the investment of Rennes, Lancaster made a diversion to Dinan, which he hoped to reduce without extraordinary difficulty. After some desultory fighting a cessation of hostilities was agreed on. During the truce, Olivier, a younger brother of Bertrand Du Guesclin, left the town unarmed, when he was made prisoner by an English knight, Thomas of Canterbury, who refused to surrender him without a ransom. Bertrand, who was at the time between Dinan and Pontorson, when informed of the arrest of his brother, rode into the English camp and presented himself before the Duke of Lancaster, loudly denouncing the violation of the truce.

Thomas of Canterbury made some excuse to justify his conduct, and then threw down his glove and challenged the Breton to mortal combat. Du

Guesclin at once picked up the glove, and one of the knights on the English side offered him his horse.

The combat was arranged to take place in Dinan itself.

And now ensued a curious incident. A young lady of noble family in the town, Thiphaine Raguennel, aged twenty-four years, and who was supposed to be endowed with second sight, fell into a trance, and in that condition foretold the success of Du Guesclin. When he was informed of her prognostication he treated it contemptuously. "Who leans on the word of a woman is a fool," he said. "A woman has as much sense in her head as has a sheep."

Some years after Thiphaine became his wife. The lists for the contest were prepared where is now the market-place. The Duke of Lancaster with an escort of twenty knights was suffered to enter the town, and almost all the inhabitants of Dinan crowded to see the spectacle.

At the first tilt the lances of both combatants flew to splinters, and they fought for a while with their swords, without much result. At last Canterbury, in his endeavour to cleave the head of Du Guesclin, missed his aim, and the sword escaped from his hand. Bertrand at once leaped from his horse, and seizing the fallen weapon threw it outside the lists.

The English knight turned his horse upon his adversary, and endeavoured to bear him down with its weight; but Du Guesclin jumped aside, drove his sword into the beast, which reared and fell with its rider. Thomas went down with such a crash that the laces of his helmet gave way, and his face was

exposed. Thereupon, in a paroxysm of rage, Bertrand leaped upon him, and began to mash his face with his mailed fists. He was with difficulty induced to desist, and yielded only at the request of the Duke.

Then, as the defeated man was carried off the field, Du Guesclin knelt to the Duke and said, "Sieur, but for the respect I bear you, I would have killed the caitiff."

"He deserved no better fate," replied Lancaster. "Your brother shall be discharged, and shall receive a thousand crowns for his equipment. The arms of the felon knight and his best horse shall be yours."

Dinan should be seen from the river; thence the effect of the town with its towers and gables rising above the steep, rocky, and wooded heights is eminently picturesque and stately. The river has been bridged by a viaduct 125 feet above the surface of the water. Further down stream, at La Hisse, is the iron railway bridge, the longest single span in France, and one of the longest in Europe. The girders were thrust forward by a hydraulic engine, with enormous weights on the short end till the centre of gravity was overpassed, when they sank and lodged on the pier built to receive them.

The river presents scenes of exquisite beauty, and should be both ascended to Evran and descended to the sea.

A short mile to the south of the town is the village of Lehon, clustered about an ancient abbey, and subsisting on soapsuds, the villagers living on the washing done for the people of Dinan. The church of the abbey was ruined at the Revolution,

but has been restored, for the most part well. The east window, however, is a conception of the modern architect, and is bad. The stained glass is only endurable as giving the history of the foundation of the abbey. The story of the foundation is curious enough.

One day Nominoe, King of Brittany, was hunting by the Rance, when he lighted on a few hermits living in this warm and secluded spot, who at once clamoured for a grant of land on which to erect a monastery.

"But where 'is your *body*?" inquired Nominoe. "No saint, no site."

To understand this we must go back to pre-Celtic usage.

Among the primitive inhabitants of the land, in Britain, Ireland, and Armorica alike, no man could assure to himself undisputed and inalienable landed property *till he was dead*. Only when a tomb contained him did he become a landed proprietor who could not be dispossessed. His family thenceforth acquired legal rights as guardians of the tomb.

The Celts, Gauls, Scots, Britons alike adopted many of the ideas and institutions of those whom they had subdued, and when they became Christians gave to this legal right a new complexion. A body, not necessarily of a saint as we understand the term, guaranteed security of tenure. A saint with them was not necessarily a pre-eminently holy man, but a chief of an ecclesiastical tribe or colony. When once a body was placed in the earth it became the centre of the clan and of the tribal worship; and

about it all the members of the tribe were interred, piling up with each burial the rights of the clan to the land.

Thus, when S. Patrick wanted to make a foundation in Ireland at Clonmacnois, a leper who had been fed and cared for by him supposed that he could not better return the favour than by allowing himself to be buried alive on the spot, so as to secure it to Patrick for ever. So also when S. Columba settled at Iona it was mooted among his monks how they were to take legal possession of the isle. Thereupon one of them, Oran by name, volunteered to be buried alive, and his offer was accepted.

Thus it was that when Nominoe was solicited by these monks for a grant, "I am willing enough," he replied, "but where is the body?" The monks were in a dilemma; none of them cared to sacrifice himself like Oran or Patrick's leper. They put their heads together and considered what should be done. They happened to have heard that in the isle of Sark lay the body of a saintly abbot named Maglorius, and they resolved on stealing it. So one of the little community took boat and went to Sark on the pretext that he had come to venerate the dead man's bones. The monks of Sark were highly gratified, and the pilgrim at once opened secret negotiations with the custodian of the tomb. Having made terms with the fellow, he returned to Lehon and informed the brethren of his success. Thereupon they all took boat together and proceeded to Sark, moved thereto, as they gave out, by the growing reputation of the saint and the glowing account

given them by their brother. They assured the monks of Sark that nothing would satisfy their ardent devotion save a night spent in vigil at the tomb. The permission for this was readily accorded by the unsuspecting Sarkites.

In the dead of night the anchorites rifled the grave, carried off the dead man to their boat, and they were well on their way to the mainland before the theft was discovered and when pursuit was hopeless.

On reaching the coast, the rogues carried the chest with them from the shore, and, being hungry and tired, rested in a peasant's orchard, and tucked the coffin up in a fork of the pear tree, under which they sat to breakfast. One of the anchorites, after having gnawed his bread, expressed his desire for a pear.

"Bah!" said the peasant, "these pears are hard and sour."

The hermit, however, picked one from the bough on which rested the chest with the bones, and putting his teeth into it said, smiling, "Where the sacred body has reposed, to me the pears will certainly be sweet and soft."

This saying was, of course, magnified in later years and distorted into a miracle, and the incident has been represented in the east window of Lehon Church.

The abbey continued to exist—hardly to flourish—till the Revolution. When the storm burst there were in it six brethren, enjoying good revenues and leading utterly idle and useless lives; so much so

that they had incurred the hatred and disgust of the peasantry, who rose in a body and tore the nest of these idlers to pieces. The same took place at S. Jacut-sur-Mer, now a favourite watering-place. There the peasants ripped up the very foundations, leaving not one single stone upon another. Within one century the very tradition as to the actual site of the abbey has gone. A lesson this that may be taken to heart by all well-to-do loafers. The century we have entered upon will not endure that the men of means shall not contribute to their fellow-men's well-being. The class of vacuous loungers, of golf and polo players, who spend their days in nothing useful, will be swept away as dirt.

But to return to Dinan itself.

The present Mairie was a hospital erected by the Count de la Garaye, and the Sisters of the Sagesse, who to this day undertake the nursing of the sick and the education of the infants and the young girls of the poor in the town, were introduced into the place by this Count.

An easy stroll beyond the railway station leads to the ruins of La Garaye in a lovely situation. The château was never large; it was in the Flamboyant style, and contains a fine fireplace and a good deal of delicate sculpture, but the whole is utterly ruinous: wrecked at first at the Revolution, it has suffered since from neglect.

The Count and Countess de la Garaye were a lively young couple, passionately fond of hunting. In 1710 Claude de la Garaye was aged thirty-six. One day he and his wife were out riding, when he galloped his



horse at a ditch. He had just cleared it, when, seeing that the width was beyond the powers of the mare his wife rode, he turned in his saddle and signed to her not to attempt it. But he was too late; her steed had already risen for the leap. It failed, fell with the Countess, and rolled with her in the ditch. She was so severely injured that all hopes of her ever becoming a mother were at an end, and her health was permanently affected. This led to a complete change in the direction of both their lives. Instead of giving all their thoughts and time to sport, frivolity, and selfish pursuits, the young couple resolved on devoting themselves to the alleviation of the sufferings of the poor.

At the time much ophthalmia prevailed among the people of the district. M. de la Garaye went to Paris and studied with the most eminent oculists there. When he had become a proficient he returned and built a long edifice at his gates for the reception of patients suffering in their eyes, and where he could daily attend to them.

Not satisfied with this, he erected the pile which has since been converted into the Mairie, as well as a convent for the grey and white Sisters of the Sagesse, who were to minister to the sick and instruct the little children.

During the war with America a Dillon regiment was raised by disloyal Irishmen, to fight the English in Canada. In 1778 two battalions went to Brittany under Colonel Arthur Dillon, and were placed in cantonments near Lorient and Brest, and then were moved to Dinan and Paramé, near S. Malo. A great

many men were placed in the castle at Dinan, when plague broke out among them and many died, and the disorder spread to the town. A large number of these Irish disloyals were buried in the cemetery of S. Sauveur, now turned into an English garden. The deaths occurred in March, 1779, and what remained of the battalions was then removed to Morlaix.

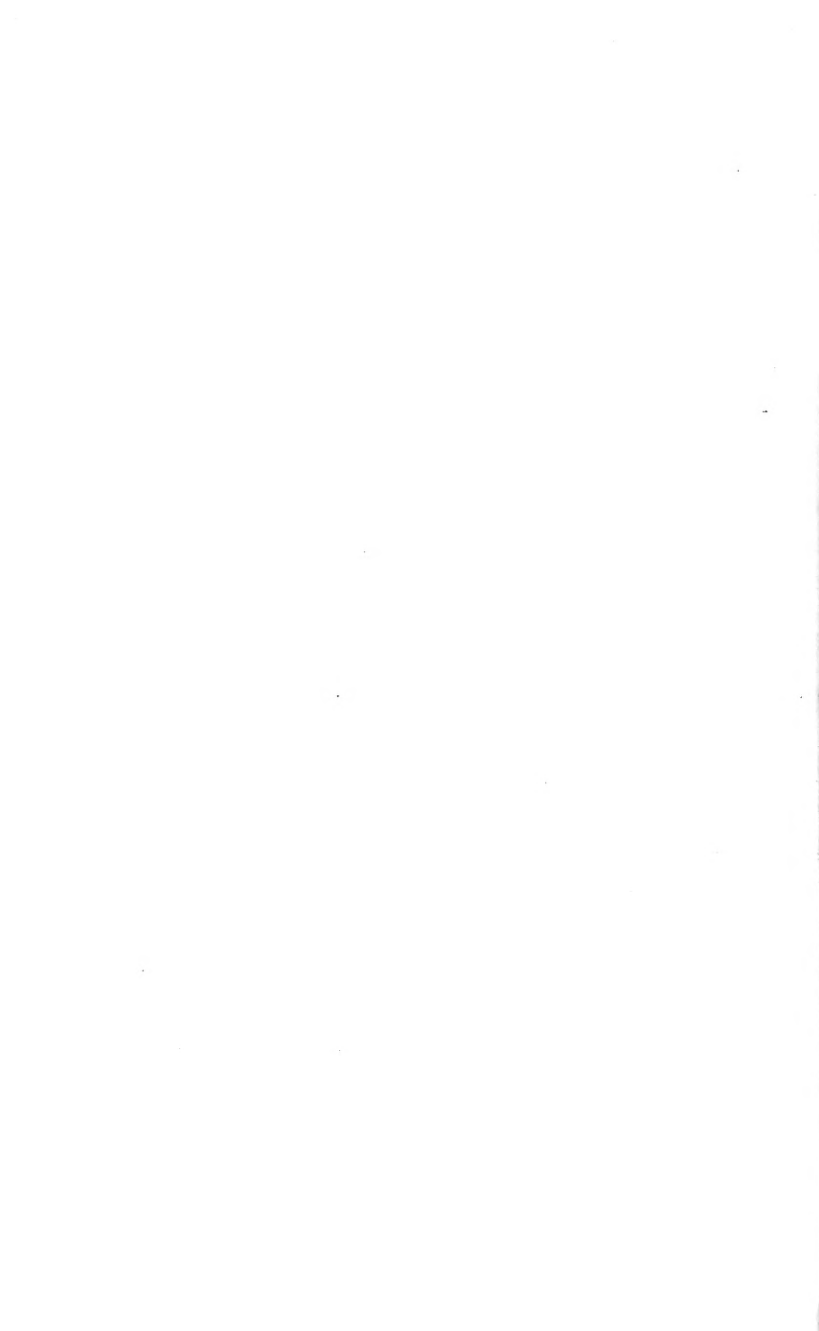
The château of La Conninais is situated within two miles of the town, in a picturesque spot. At the Revolution it was not destroyed, but became the property of a peasant, who disposed of it for one cow, and it became the possession of the English family of Foster. It has a picturesque tower, and a chapel in the Flamboyant style, but the main building was erected when there was a revulsion in taste. It contains, among other interesting pictures, portraits of the Count and Countess of La Garaye. There are also portraits of the same benefactors at La Sagesse in Dinan, but so repainted as to have lost their value.

At S. Samson, on the Dinard road, is a fine menhir, in a leaning position. Girls scramble up it, and slide down, and if they can do so without scratching their hands or falling off, count themselves certain of getting husbands within a twelvemonth.

Many pleasant excursions may be made from Dinan. One is to Corseul, the ancient capital of the Curiosoliti, and a Gallo-Roman city. It bore the name of Fanum Martis, and served as a quarry for public buildings round about, amongst others for Lehon Abbey.



CHATEAU DE LA CONNINAIS, DINAN



Numerous remains have been exhumed there by the plough and spade; among others a monument erected by an African legionary, who was quartered at Corseuil, to his mother, who, rather than be parted from her darling son, followed him from the Atlas to bleak and rainy Armorica.

Another excursion is to Dol.

This was a monastery founded by S. Samson. Samson was the son of Amwn the Black, who had fled for his life from the attentions of a brother who wanted to slit his gullet, so as to possess himself of his tribal inheritance. Amwn escaped to Wales, where he married the daughter of a petty king of Glamorgan. Samson was anxious to get to Brittany, but at the time the usurper Conmore was supreme, and was supported by Childebert, King of the Franks at Paris.

Samson was for a while in Cornwall, watching his opportunity. Presently he heard that there was much discontent in Domnonia, and he sent his agents throughout the land to work up a revolution. Then he went to Paris, and persuaded Childebert to remain neutral. The Frank King was not unwilling to see the Bretons fly at one another's throats, and he allowed Samson to take Judicael, or Judual, the rightful heir to the throne, and make him the figure-head of the revolution. Samson then hastened to Jersey, where he drilled soldiers, and at a given signal crossed with his men, whilst the malcontents in Brittany rose. Conmore was killed, Judicael enthroned, and Samson was largely rewarded for his services. Dol became a well-endowed monastery.

Years passed, and in the ninth century Nominoe was King of Brittany, and in a succession of battles defeated Charles the Bald, and established the independence of his native land.

He was further determined that not only should his realm be free, but also the Church therein. He summoned a council, and several of the bishops who were Franks were charged with simony, and forced to admit their guilt and lay down their crosiers.

Then the King constituted seven sees in Brittany. There had previously been only three, or possibly four. He made the see of Dol archiepiscopal, with jurisdiction over the other six. Hitherto the archbishops of Tours had claimed jurisdiction over Brittany, but actually never had exercised any that had been acknowledged by the true Breton Church; it had been admitted only by the old Gallo-Roman sees of Rennes, Nantes, and Vannes. Such a daring proclamation of independence met with the most strenuous opposition from the Church of France and from the Popes. Councils denounced, Popes condemned, yet for three hundred years Dol remained a metropolitan see, though at last with shrunken authority, the older sees having withdrawn their allegiance from it.

Now and then the Pope was able to steal an advantage, but it was transitory. At the time of the invasion of England by the Conqueror the Archbishop of Dol was Juthael, who was under the protection of Duke Alan III. After that he was archbishop Juthael married, and then began to

alienate ecclesiastical estates for the sake of his children.\*

The people of Dol rose against him, and drove him out. He took refuge with his family at Mont S. Michel. He was sustained not only by Duke Alan, but also by William the Conqueror, who sent his troops into the see, plundering and burning villages. In their difficulty, the party opposed to Juthael elected as their archbishop a boy of sixteen, Gilduin, brother of the powerful Count of Combourg, and sent him to Rome with a tutor, to be consecrated. The Pope could not with decency make a lad archbishop in defiance of the canons, so he consecrated the tutor instead, having first secured from him unconditional surrender of the liberties and independence of the see.

But this success was transitory, and Dol speedily reassumed its rights, and it was not till 1199 that Innocent III. succeeded with the aid of the French Crown in crushing this proud and recalcitrant see. He reduced it from being metropolitan, and since the Revolution it has ceased even to be a bishopric.

The ancient cathedral church was in the Norman

\* Married bishops were by no means rare ; the clergy were almost universally so. Tetbald, son of a priest, obtained the bishopric of Rennes by the influence of his mother's family. When bishop he married Oivelan, daughter of the Archdeacon of Nantes, and by her had a son, Walter. On the death of Oivelan, Bishop Tetbald married again, and had two more sons. On becoming old Tetbald became Abbot of S. Melanius, and his son Walter was made Bishop of Rennes, when he married Oideline, and had by her a son, Guarin, and two daughters. During his life Walter retired from his see, vacating it for his son Guarin. On the death of this latter his uncle became bishop.—DE LA BORDERIE, *Hist. de Bretagne*, iii. p. 169.

style, but it was burnt by our King John in 1203. Its reconstruction was commenced soon after. The church is, accordingly, mainly of the First Pointed style, but the original Norman drums of pillars remain, surrounded by disengaged delicate columns, that are in places bound together by straps of iron. The church has a square east end, with a magnificent window in it full of old glass, badly restored. The south porch is of the fourteenth century.

A little way from Dol rises the Mont Dol, which was a prehistoric site, and numerous flint tools have been found there. But something more curious still was there discovered. A little chapel on the hill had in it two altars. A few years ago the building was destroyed to make way for a telegraphic station, when a very curious discovery was made. The two altar-slabs were found to be composed each of a series of nine funnel holes in three rows. All twenty-seven in each slab had been filled in with plaster and smoothed over. Outside the chapel were small doors communicating with chambers beneath the two altars. This chapel proved to have been originally a temple for the performance of the Taurobolia in late classic times, when the worship of Mithras became fashionable. An ox was slain on the altar, and its blood rained down through the funnels into the space below, in which crouched the worshipper who desired to undergo the baptism of blood. Julian the Apostate, in his desire to wash off his Christianity, underwent this ceremony.

The forest of Coëtquen (the White Wood) is so called because it was formerly composed chiefly of



the silver-barked birch. It lies to the east of Dinan. Of the ruins of Coëtquen Castle a tragic story is told. The Marquis had married a young and beautiful girl, and she was about to become a mother when he was called away to the wars, where he was mortally wounded.

Immediately on hearing the tidings that his life was despaired of, the two brothers of the Marquis de Coëtquen hastened to the castle, gained the steward, and in the night conveyed the poor lady into one of the dungeons, where they left her to die of starvation.

It was then given out that she had died in child-bed, and a funeral was arranged, the body to be conveyed to the church of the Carmelites at Dinan. All went on as was desired; but it is said that certain of the servants or retainers of the Marquis managed—their suspicions having been roused—to get access to a window that admitted light into the dungeon, and they there saw the dead body of the Marchioness extended on the earth. But their report was disregarded as idle gossip, and no steps were taken to investigate the matter.

At the Revolution, when the chapel of the Carmelites was destroyed, the vaults were rifled and the lead coffins carried off to be run into bullets. Then that of the Marchioness de Coëtquen was discovered to contain only earth and stones.

Combourg Château, the seat of the Châteaubriand family, with conical slated towers, is in good condition, and it stands in a park. Many relics of the great writer are there shown.

S. Malo should be visited from Dinan, if not already seen, on leaving the steamer from Southampton. The little city occupies a ledge of rock, a peninsula that can ill contain the town, so limited is the area.

The ancient city was at Aleth, where is now the *cité*, another peninsula between the Anse de Sablon and the Port de Solidor. Here the foundations of the early cathedral church have been traced. The highest point is occupied by a fort.

In the sixth century Aleth was a flourishing town, occupied almost entirely by the pagan natives, for few British settlers had come among them till S. Malo appeared. He had indeed been preceded by one Aelhairarn, Latinised into Aaron, "The Iron Brow," a Welsh missionary, whose main foundation is in Cardiganshire, under the crags and marvellous rude stone fortress of Treir' Caeri. Leaving his native land, he came to Brittany and founded a church near Lamballe. Then in his old age he proceeded to where stands now S. Malo, and laboured as best he could for the conversion of the inhabitants of the town of Aleth. But "one soweth and another reapeth"; his success was small, and he gladly welcomed Malo when he came from Wales, younger in years and without the discouragement of failure to maim his efforts.

Malo was first cousin of S. Samson, a disciple of S. Brendan, whom he had attended during his seven years' wanderings on the Atlantic, and with him had discovered the Canaries and Madeira.

Malo succeeded where Aaron had failed; and he

established himself at Aleth, but founded a monastery on the rock where is now the town that bears his name. Malo worked like his monks in the fields. One spring day he took off his hood and hung it in a tree. When he went to resume it a little jenny wren flew out, and peeping in he saw that she had laid an egg there. He left his hood suspended, and suffered the wren to make of it her nest and to rear her young therein.

For forty years Malo ruled Aleth as bishop, but he seems to have become self-willed and ill-tempered in his old age, and because his flock would not conform in all things to his wishes he cursed them roundly and departed, first to Luxeuil, and then finally to Saintes. There he died on December 16th, 621.

S. Malo was long a nest of corsairs, and the seadogs there gave rude knocks to the English. One in particular—René Duguay-Trouin—was born at S. Malo in 1673. War having been declared between France and England and Holland, the family of Duguay fitted out a privateer of eighteen guns, and René behaved with such courage on board that in 1692 he was given command of a frigate of eighteen guns, when he captured two English frigates that were escorting thirty merchant vessels, and brought this fleet of prizes into S. Malo. He was then aged nineteen. In 1694, in a privateer armed with forty cannon, he fell on an English squadron of six men-of-war and engaged them. But the contest was too unequal, and he was taken and conveyed to Plymouth, whence he escaped by the aid of a Devonshire girl who fell in love with him.

No sooner was he back than he was given command of a royal vessel and sent to cruise along the coasts of England and Ireland. He took six prizes and then fell in with a fleet of sixty sail escorted by two men-of-war, and without hesitation he attacked them and forced them to surrender. For this brilliant action Louis XIV. sent him a sword of honour. In 1695 he captured three great Indiamen carrying a hundred and fifty-four guns. Soon after, on board the *Sans Pareil*, an English capture, he cruised along the coasts of Spain, and, having taken two Dutch vessels, boldly attempted to break his way with his captures through the English fleet. The English, misled by the build of his vessel, allowed him to pass, but one frigate approached to challenge him, being perplexed at his independent action. He at once turned and gave battle, drove the frigate back, and escaped with his prizes.

In 1696, in command of three vessels from Brest, he went to meet the fleet at Bilbao and encountered it, escorted by three men-of-war under the Baron van Wassenaer. He boarded the commandant's vessel and took it. All the Dutch officers were killed or wounded, and Duguay-Trouin lost three of his kinsmen in the engagement. This victory was followed by a frightful storm, in which it was found necessary to cast all the cannon overboard. The water poured into the hold, and the wounded, screaming with pain and terror, endeavoured to escape drowning by dragging themselves up the ladder. It was impossible to help them. When Duguay was relating his adventures to Louis XIV.

he said, "Then I ordered the *Gloire* to follow me." "Sir!" interrupted the King, "la gloire vous a toujours suivie."

Duguay-Trouin hovered in 1704 along the English coasts, took a man-of-war of a hundred and forty-four guns and the convoy of twelve merchant vessels. He was ennobled by the King after having taken over three hundred merchantmen and twenty English and Dutch men-of-war. He died in 1736.

We flatter ourselves that England always had the command of the seas; that is because our histories slur over the facts of the naval contests at the close of the seventeenth century. The plain truth is that it was the French in the reign of Louis XIV. who held the supremacy, and that they did so was mainly due to the boldness of the Breton sailors.

To return again to Dinan.

It is the native place of M. Botrel, the peasant poet of Brittany, the son of a blacksmith. The family has been one of the forge for several generations. The ancestral anvil was in a hamlet near Dinan, and in the commune, but as business was bad the father was constrained to move into the town. The little Théodore, however, did not accompany his parents, but was placed with his grandmother and his uncles, and was passed from one to the other, eating the bread of the poor, living upon charity, listening to the songs of the peasants, drinking in their old tales. Brought up in the midst of old-world ideas, his mind was steeped in the simple poetry of the people. He early developed a happy knack of composition; but his verses are not mere

rhyme, but contain ideas, and reveal the presence of genuine poetic power. He understood that the folk-songs that were in general use were sorry stuff, and new importations were not a little coarse. He applied himself to the task of recreating the popular poetry of Upper Brittany, and has been to the French-speaking portion of Armorica what Edwin Waugh has been to Yorkshire, Barnes to Dorsetshire, and Robert Burns to Scotland. What Hebel has done for the Black Foresters, and Rosegger for the Carinthians, that has Théodore Botrel done for the folk of Ille-et-Vilaine and Côtes-du-Nord. As he himself says, "We are menaced with a great evil. Not only is the Breton tongue threatened, but the Breton soul itself. That flower of sentiment which was its beauty is ready to shrivel up at contact with a materialistic civilisation. Vulgar songs are penetrating throughout the land of the saints, brought home from the barrack and dropped by commercial travellers. I have done what I can to substitute for these depressing compositions something that shall smell of the broom and contain a waft of the soil."

I shall give a specimen later on—"La Paimpolaise," that has taken hold on the affections of the people, both on account of its pathos and the sweetness of the melody to which it has been wedded.

## CHAPTER VII

### S. BRIEUC

The origin of S. Briec—The arrival of Brioc—Meets Rhiwal—The city—The well and cave—The port—Viaduct of La Méaugon—S. Mawgan—Ploufragan—Three-breasted Gwen—Wild horses—Institution of races—Vitrified fortress of Péran—How constructed and when—The blessing of the fleet.

THE origin of this cathedral city is as follows. At the close of the fifth or early in the sixth century Brioc, an abbot, arrived in a coracle covered with hides, along with a hundred and sixty-eight followers, at the mouth of the Gouet. Brioc was a native of Cardiganshire; his father was Irish, and his mother Saxon. The Irish had occupied the whole seaboard till expelled by a great effort of the British under the sons of Cunedda; and it was due to this that Brioc was constrained to migrate from his native land—though his biographer avers that he left out of pure devotion.

The estuary of the Gouet is a creek of some miles in length running between precipitous or steep hills. Brioc ran his vessel up as high as the tide would carry him, then disembarked and looked out for a spot on which to settle. Now immediately above where the tide reached is a fork formed by the course of a little side stream entering the valley of the

Gouet, and this tongue of land had undoubtedly been fortified in prehistoric times. Brioc and his party ascended to it, and with stakes cut in the forest that clothed the country he was able to make the old mound drawn across the neck serviceable to protect him and his community against wolves.

The arrival of this party of strangers had attracted the attention of a steward of Rhiwal (Hoel the Rig, or King) who had established his court at Hilion, not five miles distant. The steward reported the arrival to his master, who came to the spot to see who the new-comers were; to his joy he recognised, if not exactly a relation, as the biographer asserts, yet one from the same part of Wales as himself, and with whose family he was acquainted. Rhiwal, in fact, was the son of Budoc, who had been driven out of Cornouaille in a family quarrel, and had taken refuge in what is now Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen. They discussed old scenes and mutual acquaintances, and in the end Rhiwal gave up to Brioc the old fort and a tract of land around it.

About three miles south was another colonist, called Brychan, or Fragan, who had come from Cornwall and was cousin to Cado, duke of that country.

Brioc now settled his followers on the land accorded him, and when Rhiwal died, this chief further invested his friend with his *plou* or domain on the further side of the Bay of Yffiniac. By this means Brioc became well estated, and in the Middle Ages the bishops of S. Brieuc ruled as temporal lords over their county.



The city which grew up on the site of Brioc's settlement is composed of tortuous streets, and contains some very picturesque old houses of wood and plaster. The cathedral is not striking externally but is dignified within, and possesses many admirable examples of leaded glazing, immeasurably more beautiful than the odious modern painted glass so prevalent in the French churches, and of which there are some particularly villainous examples in the cathedral.

The town is composed of many convents, and nuns in white wool flutter up and down the streets like gigantic moths. The modern churches are about as ugly as can be conceived.

The old fountain and chapel of S. Brioc in the Flamboyant style deserve a visit, for both are picturesque; the spring rises in the cave of the saint to which he was wont at times to resort for prayer and commune with God. By a flight of steps leading from the right side of the altar the cave can be descended to.

A walk down the valley to the port is advisable. The port is two miles from the town. A steamer runs between it and Plymouth, till it is wrecked, a fate that has overtaken three, the *Channel Queen*, the *Rossgull*, and the *Legue*. No omnibus meets the boat, and no cabstand is at the port, so that passengers on arrival are put to some inconvenience.

From the port a path climbs the hill to the Tour de Cesson, that commands the mouth of the Gouet, and a glorious view of the Bay of S. Brieuc.

The valley of the Gouet is picturesque, a cleft

between steep granitic hills, in spring golden with broom and gorse. A walk that will well repay the visitor is the ascent of this valley to La Méaugon Viaduct, a bold structure in two tiers, and rising 180 feet above the level of the stream. The superior stage consists of twelve arches, the lower of six. To judge of its height it is advisable to walk along the footway over the lower stage. Beyond is the little village of La Méaugon (Lan-Meugaint). The saint, who was a native of Wales, is represented in a window of fifteenth-century glass, boldly drawn in brown and yellow, as good as if done by the hand of Albert Dürer. In the churchyard is a granite Calvary.

To Meugaint—Mawgan, also called Mancen—Ireland owes a debt of gratitude that has never been paid. Yet without him it may be doubted whether S. Patrick would have achieved his magnificent work. Mawgan was the head of the great colleges for missionaries, that sent a stream of trained disciples into the island to carry on the work begun by Patrick, to build on the foundations he laid. His great colleges were Whiterne, in Galloway, and Tygwyn (the White House) on S. David's Head, in Pembrokeshire—the one to supply the north, the other the south of Ireland with clergy. No life of Mawgan exists; if ever written, it has perished; but we obtain notices of him from the biographies of his pupils. The life of a schoolmaster is uneventful and prosaic, but of infinite importance. Mawgan had nurseries in Cornwall and in Brittany, where the young candidates for the mission field were gathered in, and when

instructed were sent on to him to one or other of his great houses in North Britain and Wales. Thence he despatched them to Ireland.

A visit to Ploufragan hardly repays the trouble. The church is modern and good, but the steeple is thin as a stick of asparagus. Fragan (Brychan) is represented in the church by a statue of a king in mantle, Roman armour, a crown, and holding sword and sceptre. As a matter of fact there was little of royalty about him except his blood. He arrived in Armorica in a somewhat woeful condition, along with his wife Gwen and three children. Gwen had been twice married; by her first husband she was the mother of S. Cadvan. Now, according to a Welsh expression, a woman who had become a mother by two husbands was called "The Three-breasted." This expression became antiquated and was misunderstood, and the fable grew up that Gwen actually possessed three breasts, and that she suckled her three younger children simultaneously at them. In this guise she is represented in statuary in two or three places, but not at Ploufragan. Brychan\* established himself where is now the village that bears his name, with his retainers about him.

He and Rhiwal were on good terms, and he recognised the other as his king. At the time the forests of Armorica abounded in wild horses, which galloped about in great troops. Both the chiefs devoted themselves to the chase of these horses, and with decoys

\* B in composition becomes F. Plou-Brychan became Ploufragan, and then it was forgotten that his name was Brychan, and he was called simply Fragan.

and pitfalls managed to capture a good many, and then set to work to tame them. In time each had a fine stud, and when they met they were disposed each to extol his own. To settle who had the best they started races about the year 480 on the sandy flats of the Anse d'Yffiniac, with a group of rocky points such as those off the Tour de Cesson as goal, and the boys of each *plou* acted as jockeys. The first race on record in Brittany was between the tamed horses of Brychan and those of Rhiwal. The steeds, however, went wild, forgot the docility that had been imposed on them, and tore madly about on the sands. Only one, mounted by a boy called Magl, son of Conomagl, Brychan's steward, obeyed the rein and flew straight as a dart to the goal. But just as the horse was about to reach it and deserve the prize, it put its foot in a hole, stumbled, fell, and threw its rider, who was picked up insensible. One of the sons of Brychan, Winwaloe by name, ran to the succour of the little jockey, and succeeded in bringing him to his senses again. He had been stunned by the fall on the sand, but no bones had been broken. This is the first incident in the life of a sufficiently noted man who has left his stamp on Western Finistère, and of whom we shall hear more in the sequel.\*

More interesting than Ploufragan, which has nothing but its historical associations to recommend it, is the vitrified Castle of Péran, that can be

\* Brychan was cousin of Cado, Duke of Cornwall. It is significant that both his name and that of his steward Conomagl are met with on inscribed stones of the period in Cornwall.

reached by taking the train to S. Julien, the first station on the line to Loudéac. The camp is in the shape of an ellipse, and the defence was composed of a rampart of loose stones put together without order, with a revetment of earth. It is 12 feet wide at the base, 4 feet at top, and is about 7 feet high.

What is interesting about this camp is that it has a vitrified core, and that it reveals the process whereby vitrification was effected. On being cut through, the mound exhibits its structure in section. It shows a mass of loose walling 9 feet thick, with a kernel of scoria and glass that has been produced by a fire of great intensity in the centre of the wall. On the outside the walling is loose and uncompacted, but the interior is welded together by a vitreous paste that holds pieces of quartz and undissolved granite in suspension. So soon as liquefaction began, the molten matter ran like honey among the interstices of the stone and, where sufficient in quantity, sealed them together, where insufficient left only a glaze on the surface of the stones.

Where the fire was most intense it has left a core of glass from bottom to top, but where weak there exists only a pudding of vitrified matter from 3 to 6 feet thick. Everywhere the fire seems to have been maintained in sufficient intensity to decompose the fusible elements in the stone of which the wall was composed, and to profoundly alter the character of such as would not melt. According to a local tradition, the fires were maintained for seven years before the entire camp was surrounded by a wall of glass. The hearths were at a distance of about

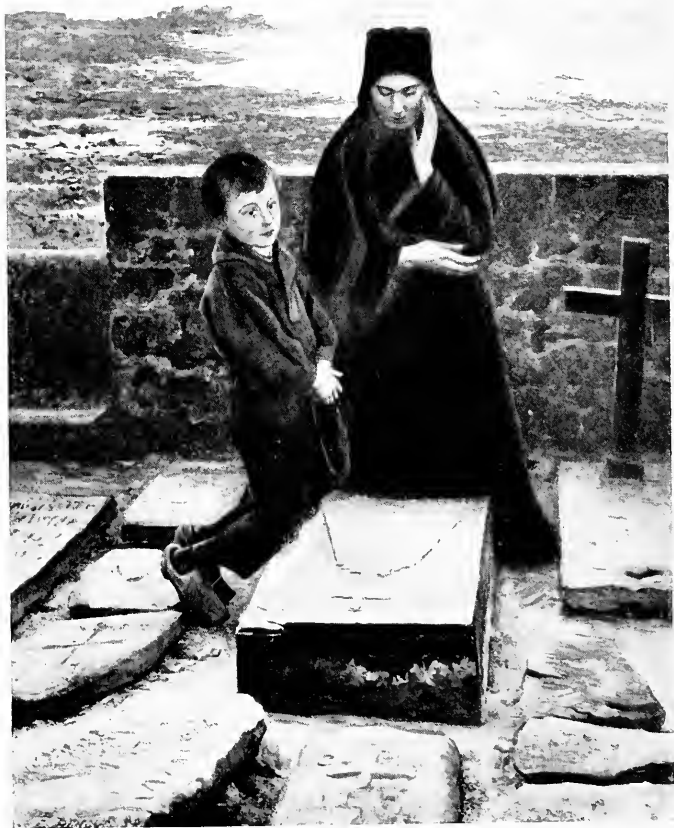
12 to 16 feet apart. To what race and age is this glass castle to be attributed?

A medal of Germanicus and some Roman tiles have been found in it, and a Roman road runs by it, but this proves nothing further than that the Romans made use of the camp. One cannot conceive the master-builders of the world having recourse to such a clumsy and laborious process for cementing the walls of a fortress. Any amount of lime was accessible from the sands of Yffiniac, composed of broken shells. It has been shown by experiment that for the vitrification of 6 feet of such walling a fire would have to be maintained at full blast for fifteen days. Now the rampart surrounds an ellipse measuring 400 feet long and 330 feet wide. Conceive of the labour and expenditure of fuel required to convert such walls into a conglomerate of bad glass! It is surely evident that this castle must have been erected by a people who had no knowledge of the use of lime. It is also probable that the attempt to compact walls by vitrification cannot have been lasting, as the result is by no means commensurate with the labour expended upon them.

It is curious how in fairy tales the tradition of glass castles hung on, and is continually met with.

On the first Sunday in February the fleet of fishermen for Iceland arrives from Binic at the port of S. Briec, when the bishop and clergy come down in procession from the cathedral and bless the vessels and the sailors starting on their perilous voyage that lasts some nine months.





THE FISHERMAN'S WIDOW



## CHAPTER VIII

### TRÉGUIER

Paimpol—The fleet for the Iceland fishery—Loss of lives—Tombstones—Superstitions—Pierre Lotti's *Pêcheur d'Islande*—"La Paimpolaise"—The churches of Paimpol—Tréguier—The cathedral—The tomb of S. Yves—S. Tugdual—The tomb of Pompeia—Curious mistake—S. Yves at Trédarzec—Praying to Death—The privilege of cursing—La Roche Derrien—The battle—The chapel of Lanleff—A Dance of Death—Minihi Tréguier—Manufacture of "old" carved oak.

PAIMPOL is the terminus of a branch line from Guingamp. To reach Tréguier the traveller descends at Pontrieux, where the station is above a mile from the town, and takes a place, if there be room, in the ramshackle conveyance that meets the train, and into which often more passengers are squeezed than comports with comfort. From Paimpol starts every year a fleet of fishing boats for Iceland. The day is February 20th, on which a procession of the clergy descends to the harbour, and the boats and their crews are solemnly blessed before departure.

Formerly the vessels for Iceland started on April 1st, but since 1863 the date has been thrust back to February 20th. Vessels to the number of 170

or 180 leave Paimpol and the other little ports on the Bay of S. Brieuc. Dunkerque and Gravelines with the Breton ports furnish in all some 1,400 fishermen engaged in the Iceland fisheries. The little cemeteries at Paimpol, Persos Hamon, Dahouët, Binic, and S. Quay tell a sad tale. Memorial crosses and inscriptions have been reared there over empty graves, made for fathers of families, husbands and brothers, whose bodies have been swallowed by the deep sea. *Perdu en mer* is met with again and again. Here is one inscription as a specimen: "To the memory of Sylvestre Camas, swept from the deck and lost in the Nordfjord in Iceland, aged 16 years, 18 June, 1886." Over these untenanted graves tears are shed, prayers offered, and on them garlands are laid on the *Jour des Morts*.

It is a popular belief that on All Souls' Eve the drowned mariner comes from his watery grave to lie and drain away the brine with which he is drenched in the tomb prepared for him in the churchyard at home.

Paimpol is the scene of Pierre Lotti's story, *Pêcheur d'Islande*, of which the hero and heroine were real personages. Yann, the hero, however, never married Gaude. He could not forgive the novelist for having drowned him. He regarded it as a bad presage. "It is certain to bring misfortune to me," he often said, and verily he was lost at sea, when returning from the Iceland fishery, at the entrance to his native harbour, in 1899. He was a broad-shouldered, kindly, simple-hearted man, nearly forty years of age. La Gaude is still alive,

and is readily pointed out to anyone interested in seeing her.

Here are some couplets from a Paimpol *chanson* by Botrel :—

- “Quittant les genêts et sa lande  
 Quand le Breton se fait marin,  
 En allant aux pêches d'Islande,  
 Voilà quel est le doux refrain,  
 Que le pauvre gas (gars)  
 Fredonne tout bas  
 J'aime Paimpol et sa falaise,  
 Son vieux clocher, son grand Pardon,  
 J'aime surtout la Paimpolaise  
 Qui m'attend au pays Breton.
- “Quand leurs bateaux quittent nos rives,  
 Le curé leur dit, ‘Mes bons fieux  
 Priez souvent Monsieur Saint Yves  
 Qui nous voit des cieux toujours bleus.’  
 Et le pauvre gas  
 Fredonne tout bas,  
 Le ciel est moins bleu, n'en déplaie  
 A Saint Yvon, notre patron,  
 Que les yeux de la Paimpolaise  
 Qui m'attend au pays Breton.
- “Le brave Islandais, sans murmure  
 Jette la ligne et le harpon,  
 Puis dans un relent de saumure  
 Il se comble dans d'entre pont,  
 Et le pauvre gas  
 Fredonne tout bas  
 Je serions bien mieux à mon aise  
 Les draps tirés jusqu'au menton  
 A côté de la Paimpolaise  
 Qui m'attend au pays Breton.

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“ Puis quand la vague le designe  
L'appelant de sa grosse voix,  
Le brave Islandais se résigne  
En faisant le signe de croix  
Et le pauvre gas  
Quand vient le trépas  
Serrant la médaille qu'il baisse,  
Glisse dans l'océan sans fond  
En songeant à la Paimpolaise  
Qui l'attend au pays Breton.”

Paimpol (Pen-pol, the head of the pool) has a church with columns and arcade of 1325, and with a fine Flamboyant east window. It contains a curious Paschal candle, the light of which burns from the Resurrection to the Ascension, the Forty Days of our Lord's sojourn on earth founding His Church, and a triptych of the sixteenth century. In the neighbourhood are the ruins of the abbey of N. D. de Beauport of the thirteenth century. The church has disappeared, but the stately refectory remains.

Tréguier can be reached from Paimpol, a public conveyance passing daily, once in winter and twice in summer, between the towns. The Trieux is crossed on a suspension bridge.

Tréguier is on the tidal river Jaudy, and occupies a tongue of land at the confluence of the Guindy with the Jaudy. The river below the city somewhat resembles the Fal from Truro to the sea.

Tréguier itself is a dull town, with poor shops and few picturesque houses, but contains a fine cathedral, whose proportions, internally, are eminently pleasing. The church possesses a spire of open stonework, not satisfactory, as the perforations lack beauty and

richness such as make those of Strassburg and Freiburg so fine. They consist of slits in the stonework that let in the rain, and compel the careful roofing over of the tower beneath, so as to shed from it the water that these holes invite to stream in. Our English spires have often windows in them, but these are upright and in gables. Such is not the case with that of Tréguier, La Roche Derrien, and other Brittany spires of the same period and character.

The northern tower, called that of Hasting, commemorates in its name the Norse viking who ravaged the coasts. It is the earliest portion of the church. On the same side are the cloisters.

The cathedral contains the reconstructed tomb of S. Yves, but not his body. It is, in fact, a mere cenotaph. S. Yves, the patron of lawyers, was himself an ecclesiastical lawyer, *advocatus sed non latro*. He was born in 1255 at the château of Kermartin near Tréguier, and brought himself into notice by his honesty and integrity in the discharge of his duties. He was, moreover, immensely charitable to the poor, and converted the house into a veritable hospital. He died in 1303, and in the popular estimation has eclipsed the light of S. Tugdual, the founder of Tréguier.

After the cathedral, which has ceased to be the seat of a bishop, the only objects in Tréguier of any merit are a couple of old houses or towers at the port, and these form an effective picture.

Tréguier was founded by S. Tugdual. His mother was Pompeia, sister of the Rhiwal who received

S. Brioc. She was married to Hwyl, or Hoel the Great, in Wales, and on becoming a widow she crossed to Armorica with her two sons Tugdual and Leonore.

Her tomb may be seen at Langoat (the Church in the Wood) in a modern church like a converted railway station, and is the sole object of interest therein. It is of 1370, and is of white marble. It represents her recumbent, with her feet on a rabbit. A peculiarity noticeable here, as in the shrine of S. Yves and very generally, is that on the tombs in Brittany the figures are placed with their feet to the west and heads to the east, the reverse of all tombs in England, and generally through Christendom. On the sides are curious bas-reliefs representing her legend. (1) Her birth; (2) she is committed by her father and mother to a clerk for education; (3) her voyage to Brittany with S. Tugdual; (4) distributing alms; (5) her life at Langoat, receiving a visit from her son; (6) her death. The same subjects are shown in modern stained glass in the east window.

Beside Tugdual and Leonore, she had a daughter, Saeva (Ste. Sève), who is represented as a nun in one of the windows.

In the church will be seen a statue of Tugdual habited as a pope, wearing the triple crown. This arises from a curious blunder.

Tugdual was regarded, not by his monks only, but also by the people generally, with such affection that he was commonly called *Pabu* or Father, and a church of his foundation in Finistère is known as

Lanpabu. But in the Middle Ages, when the earlier and simple lives of the saints were recomposed and adorned with all sorts of rhetorical and legendary flourish, a biographer was puzzled over this appellation of *Pabu*, and rushed to the conclusion that he must have been a pope. Having satisfied his mind with this explanation, he next invented a series of incidents relative to the elevation of the modest Breton abbot to the supreme pontificate. He said that Tugdual had gone on pilgrimage to Rome, and arrived there just as the Pope died. Suddenly, in the sight of all the people, a white dove descended and rested on the head of the saint, whereupon by general acclaim he was elected pope. He ruled the Church for two years, and then, mounting a flying horse, sent him from heaven, went through the air back to Tréguier.

Now there is an early, almost contemporary life of Tugdual that contains not a word of all this nonsense. That was added in a life composed about the year 860. S. Tugdual died in or about 559.

Tugdual, although a veritable apostle both of Finistère and the district about Tréguier, is almost forgotten in the superior effulgence of S. Yves, the sole Breton saint who has been canonised at Rome. Devotion to him is accordingly as much encouraged by the clergy as that to the local Celtic saints is discountenanced. But to S. Yves has been transferred something of the pagan cult that has prevailed in the country from remote antiquity.

On the further side of the Jaudy, in the parish of Trédarzec, stood formerly a chapel once dedicated to

S. Sulien. But Sulien had become antiquated and out of fashion, and an image of S. Yves therein became an object of a remarkable devotion. To it all such had resort as esteemed themselves to have been wronged, and who desired revenge on those who had injured them.

At the Revolution the chapel was unroofed, and it fell into ruin, but the ossuary remained, and the venerated image was transferred to it. M. le Braz has recorded his reminiscences of a visit made by him as a boy to this shrine in company with an old woman, a professional pilgrim, that is to say a person who for the payment of a small sum would discharge an inconvenient vow taken by another, or visit some holy spot on behalf of another who desired some advantage from such a visit, but was unable to go there in person.

Now it chanced that the captain of a smack and a sailor whom he employed had fallen out, and one day the boat was upset and the captain drowned. At the funeral, the captain's widow in a loud voice denounced the sailor as the murderer of her husband. Thenceforth this unfortunate man was shunned, and no captain would give him employment. In his distress and resentment at the unjust slur cast upon him, he had recourse to the old woman, and stipulated to pay her a sum of money if she would make the pilgrimage to S. Yves at Trédarzec, and obtain redress from him, and the chastisement of his accuser.

According to usage the old woman put a coin in her shoe, and so hobbled to the shrine, taking the little boy with her, who has recorded his recollections



of the pilgrimage. On reaching the bone-house, where in the shadow, ghastly and mildewed, could be seen the image, she fell into an ecstasy of devotion, and repeated again and again, "If we have done wrong, punish us; if we be wronged, let the legs of the wrongdoer rot away!" Then, having withdrawn the coin from her sabot, she placed it at the foot of the image.

Now it so fell out that not long subsequently the captain's widow was struck with inflammation of her foot, and the leg mortified, and so she died, whereupon the entire parish was satisfied that the sailor had been wrongfully accused. "The Advocate of the Poor" had taken up his cause.

A new rector of Trédarzec arrived, and finding that the statue was persistently sought by the people of the whole neighbourhood to obtain revenge on their enemies, in 1879 he levelled the ossuary with the dust, being himself the first to apply the pick to it, and the statue he removed to his barn.

One day he was greatly annoyed by some peasants coming to him, and entreating to be permitted to visit the statue and solicit the advocacy of the saint. He dismissed them with a sharp reprimand.

Next morning he was found dead in his bed. He had actually died of apoplexy; but the parishioners insist that he was strangled in his bed by the image, which descended in the dead of night from the barn, ascended the stair to his bedroom, and there fell on him and killed him with its wooden hands.

Though the chapel and ossuary have been levelled and even the foundations torn up, and the image

has been either burnt or concealed, yet superstitious beliefs are not so easily eradicated, and a woman, who had been defrauded by her lawyer, not long ago spent a night prostrate on the spot where the chapel had been, crying to the righteous Advocate to avenge her on her enemy. In 1892 a woman in the neighbourhood who was in a languishing condition was pointed out as one stricken by the "Advocate of the Poor" in answer to a petition offered to him against her.

In Ireland there are several holy wells and ruined chapels that are resorted to for the same purpose. These are provided with round pebbles that lie on the altar or wall, and have to be turned about so many times to bring down a curse on the person denounced. There was a chapel, or well, in Wales that was resorted to till recent days for the same object.

In Devon and Cornwall certain wise-women are in request, who "ill-wish" those whom such as have been wronged desire to see punished. That all this is a relic of early paganism can hardly be a matter of question, for we can trace the process in transformation.

It was one of the legal privileges or obligations of the Druid to curse; and it was held that a curse once launched could not be recalled. Kings and chiefs took their Druids with them, as Balak took Balaam with him, to curse their enemies. Among the primitive population there was no executive. The law was known, but each man who was wronged had to carry the law into force as best he might.

If he were poor and could not do so by violence, he went to a Druid, stated his case, and asked him to curse the wrongdoer, just as now one who is aggrieved will go to a magistrate to obtain a summons. It was a legal right accorded to the weak, whereby they might redress wrongs to which they were subjected.

When the Druids fell out of repute the Christian saints stepped into their places. We are told of an Irish king who when about to go to war sent for a saint to curse his enemies, on the plea that his court Druid was too old to do the job effectually. When Dermot Mac Cearboil went to war with the Clan Niall, although he was a Christian, he took with him in his campaign a Druid to pronounce curses on the enemy; and the Clan Niall took S. Columba with them to deliver his counter-curses. S. Malo was mightily offended with a man who in horse-play had tied one of his monks hand and foot and left him on the strand to be rolled over and over by the advancing tide. In ungovernable wrath Malo cursed the man and all his progeny to the ninth generation.

We must not be too shocked at this cursing as practised by the Celtic saints. It was a legal right accorded to them, hedged about with certain restrictions. It was a means provided by law and custom to enable the weak, who could not redress their wrongs by force of arms, to protect themselves against the mighty, and to recover valuables taken from them by violence.

Thus the office of cursing and avenging wrongs

was, in historic times, transferred from the Druid to the living saint. It was but another step to pass it on from the living saint to his image or to his dead body.

La Roche Derrien is at the extreme point to which the tide rises in the river. At one time it was dominated by a fine castle, but this has been completely destroyed. It still possesses, however, a good Flamboyant church, with a two-aisled transept and one of the characteristic Breton spires.

La Roche was the scene of one of the most terrible battles fought in the War of the Two Jeannes. The English and Bretons who fought for De Montfort were under the command of Thomas Dagworth; the other side, the French, under Charles de Blois.

Dagworth had been appointed by Edward III. his lieutenant in Brittany, and he inaugurated his entry on the office by the victory of La Roche Derrien on June 18th or 20th, 1347. The battle was not one of chivalric heroism, such as Crécy and Poitiers, but degenerated into mere butchery. It was fought in the dead of night. The English had a *mot d'ordre* given them whereby to recognise one another in the darkness, and this precaution had been neglected on the French side. The English were armed with those terrible axes which had been introduced as a weapon of war by the Normans. The battle raged with great fury, the English hewing lanes through the French with their axes as though felling trees. Twice Dagworth was taken prisoner and as often rescued. Charles of Blois was wounded seventeen times before he surrendered. Quarter was hardly

sought or granted. From six to seven hundred on the French side fell, including the heads of the greatest Breton families, as de Rohan, Laval Rouge, Châteaugiron, and Châteaubrian, fighting on the side of Charles. The defeat was irreparable, and Charles de Blois, who was taken, was conveyed to England, where he remained a prisoner for nine years.

From Pontrieux an interesting excursion may be made to the old Templar church of Lanleff, at one time supposed to be a pagan temple converted to Christian use, but which is actually not older than the twelfth century.

Near by is the chapel of Kermaria, that contains fresco paintings representing a Dance of Death. Forty personages are figured, from the king to the beggar, the pope and the ploughman, all conducted by Death to the grave.

Near Tréguier, at the Minihi, is a great workshop for carved oak furniture, and of adaptation of old work to modern ends.

The Breton farmhouses abounded in *lits-clos*, shut-up bedsteads, often very rich and handsome cupboards, wardrobes, and chests.

At this manufactory the *lit-clos* is converted into an overmantel or a bookcase, or a cabinet for china.

I saw there some peculiarly fine old panels, and asked the price. It was very high. I demurred.

"Ah," said the manufacturer, "am I to sell you my cow for a trifle? It is from this I breed copies. I have reproductions now on their way to New York, London, Weissembourg, and Paris."

"But," I observed, "you have the copies."

"A copy of a copy never equals one made from the original," was the ready reply.

In the large towns of Brittany a vast amount of carved work is exposed for sale. It is usually very commonplace, even bad in style, and the bulk of it is not old at all, only bad copies. But it is eagerly bought up.

In carved oak, as in architecture and as in painting, the cultivated eye alone can discern between what is good and what is bad, what is precious and what is worthless. No carved oak is valuable unless it contains evidence of *design*, a bit of human thought and imagination moulded in wood.

## CHAPTER IX

### LANNION

Church of Brélevenez—Chimneys in churches—Geoffry de Pontblanc—Hospital—Loquivy—White spar—The coast—Trégastel—The Calvaire—The ossuary—Transfer of bones—Ploumanach—S. Kirec—S. Quay—N. D. la Clarté—Plouaret—Breton fonts—Vieux Marché—The chapel of the Seven Saints—Menez-bré—Story of Huarvé—Castle of Tonquedec—Kerfons screen—Trézeni—The well of S. Sezni.

**L**ANNION is not a town that possesses in itself great attractions, but it forms a centre whence several interesting excursions may be made.

The parish church, late Flamboyant, with some wretched, debased windows, has an ignoble tower, but on the further side of the glen to the north is the church of Brélevenez, that richly deserves investigation. It is reached by an ascent of many steps.

The church is First Pointed. The windows are set back in the wall, with an outward splay that is never seen in England. The reason is not far to seek. On the Continent the glare of the summer sun has to be excluded, and the interior of the church to be kept cool. But in England we court the sunshine, and with our internal splays diffuse the light. Moreover, with our blustering winds an external splay

would serve to gather the wind in force against the glass and enhance the risk of having it blown in.

There are a fine south porch and three very curious buttresses that shoot up like chimneys above the eaves. One of these actually is a chimney; and chimneys may be seen in a good many Brittany churches near the fonts. Till the thirteenth century baptism by immersion was regularly in use, and the fireplaces by the fonts were for the sake of warming the water, at all events sufficiently to take off the chill in bitter winter weather. The eastern apse and apsidal chapels are Romanesque and narrow for the style. Under the choir is a crypt that contains an entombment, the figures life-size. The nave has a blind triforium, but no clerestory.

At the west of the churchyard is a picturesque, crocketed, and gabled mortuary-house with chapel, and outside the south transept an ossuary.

The market-place and some of the side streets of Lannion contain quaint old houses, the most curious being that of a hatter, with the gable projecting and lurching forward as if threatening to tumble on its face into the square.

A cross let into the wall of a house in the Rue de Tréguier indicates the scene of an act of barbarity during the War of Succession—the War of the Two Jeanes, as it was called, for it was waged between the partisans of Jeanne de Montfort and Jeanne de Blois.

Geoffry de Pontblanc held the town against the English. The latter, under the Earl of Northampton, had burnt the suburbs of Guingamp, taken La Roche



Derrien, and had plundered Tréguier; then they marched on Lannion. In the night they burst the gates and spread through the town. Geoffry, roused from his bed, rushed half naked into the street, where he was set upon. He defended himself gallantly till he was pierced with an arrow, when he fell. At once his assailants were on him, and beat out his teeth. His squire, who came to his rescue, fared worse; they scooped out his eyes. The English freebooters caught Thebaut Méran, a doctor of law, who was in his night-shirt and barefooted, laded him with a barrel of wine, and forced him with their pikes to carry his burden, as he was, all the way to La Roche (1347).

The finest building in Lannion is the convent and hospital beyond the bridge by the river. It is of the Renaissance period, but before appreciation of traceried windows had passed away. There are in it two, fine in character, Flamboyant in feeling, yet executed by a Renaissance architect. To see how depraved the sense of beauty in this particular became in only a few years, one needs but to look at some of the windows of Lannion parish church.

An easy stroll takes to Loquivy, the *locus penitentiæ* of S. David, the patron of Wales, who must have spent some time in Brittany, for there are many memorials of him there.

The little churchyard contains a lovely fountain of the best Renaissance work. Why it was set up, save in the very wantonness of love for what is beautiful, is hard to say; there was no need for it, as outside the cemetery wall is the Flamboyant

holy well, presided over by a statue of S. David holding his patriarchal staff, from which the village derives its water supply.

Within the church in the baptistery is a discarded reredos, representing in carved oak the Adoration of the Magi, crowded with figures. The visitor who has a camera should not fail to devote a plate to the porch, with its staircase turret, and a gabled Flamboyant window of the nave as seen from the south-west corner of the churchyard. It is an exquisite architectural group.

The roads about Lannion are good, metalled with white spar that comes from a quartz dyke traversing the country. Some of the heaps by the roadside are white as loaf sugar.

North of Lannion there is much to be seen. The coast is curious rather than fine. There are no grand cliffs, but much granite jumbled about. The appearance is that of the débris of a granite quarry among which the sea has worked its way. The stone is friable, and is quaintly shaped by the action of wind and rain. The pudding-like lumps stand about in odd disconnected groups, and assume fantastic forms. Where not already logans, they are waiting for another lash of rain to set them swaying.

At Trégastel modern villas have been planted among them to the disadvantage of the picturesque. However, out at sea the Seven Isles stand boldly and nobly outlined above the ever-boiling surf. The entire coast bristles with reefs that are exposed when the tide ebbs, and along the whole seaboard there are vast tracts of sand and rock exposed at such

times. The coast is most perilous, and is studded with lighthouses.

On the highest point of Trégastel a Calvary has been piled up of rude blocks; it can be ascended by a winding path, and from the summit the whole stretch of coast is visible—a terrible death-trap to sailors. At the foot in a little chapel is this inscription:—

“Jété par un naufrage sur des côtes inconnues : Tout à coup vous apercevez une croix sur un rocher : Malheur à vous si ce signe de Salut ne vous fait pas couler vos larmes. Vous êtes en pays d’amis : ici sont des chrétiens, vous êtes Français, il est vrai, et ils sont Espagnols, Allemands, Anglais peut-être : Eh ! qu’importe ? N’êtes vous pas de la grosse famille de Jésus Christ : ces étrangers vous reconnaîtront pour frère : c’est vous qu’ils invitent par cette croix : ils ne vous ont jamais vue, et cependant ils pleurent de joie en vous voyant sauvé du désert.”

The meaning is obvious enough, if somewhat clumsily expressed, and we could have spared the tears.

In Pleumelin-Redon is a fine dolmen, and at Trégastel the menhir previously mentioned that has been converted into a cross and covered with the instruments of the Passion.

The church of Trégastel is of the twelfth century, with work of the sixteenth, and has a debased and very villainous east window of late Renaissance. The fine ossuary with conical roof is of the seventeenth.

Such ossuaries are emptied every fifteen or twenty years. Then a pit is dug near the cemetery wall,

and into it the "reliques," as the Bretons term the bones, are cast indiscriminately. An interesting ceremony accompanies this transfer.

The Breton churchyards are in the midst of the villages, and it would be entirely contrary to the feeling of the people to have cemeteries at a distance, to banish their dead from among them. The area is circumscribed, and cannot be extended. Consequently they are compelled to leave their dead in their graves for only some five years, after which they are exhumed, and the ground left free for a new tenant. The bones taken up are cast into the ossuary. In time the charnel-house becomes inconveniently crowded, when it has to be cleared.

A French writer thus describes the second transportation as witnessed by him at Trégastel :—

"*Reliques* is the term employed by the Bretons for the bones of all the dead without distinction accumulated higgledy-piggledy in the ossuaries. These poor relics of humanity remain for twenty, possibly for thirty years before they are returned to the earth. A century had elapsed since the last clearing of the charnel-house of Trégastel, and the bones overflowed even to the porch. When I arrived on Saturday evening the sexton was digging a great pit, but the rock was so near the surface as to make it very shallow. Two linen shrouds were spread, one on each side of the porch, and on these were already disposed some scraps of humanity.

"Within the 'Reliquary' were a little girl and a boy of twelve years up to their armpits in the mouldy fragments; they were cleaning the bones

and passing them to a troop of little fellow-workers of both sexes, who received them reverently in their aprons, and carried them to one or other of the sheets disposed for their reception before the church door. They talked in a low tone, but seemed to entertain no fear and shrinking. Bareheaded on a tombstone sat the *Jugart*, his sabre between his knees; but, as he said, his presence was a mere formality, and he was not called on to interfere on account of any unseemly levity on the part of the children. 'Here,' said he, 'we hold that the obligation to transfer the *relics* can be committed only to the innocent hands of children. To-morrow such as shall transport them to the pit that is to be their final resting-place will all have previously communicated at the altar in the early morning.'

"In the *reliquary*, whilst the *Jugart* talked with me, the children were swarming as bees, and were busy on their peaceful occupation. Their aprons and blouses were filled and then discharged, and the piles of bones increased on the two white shrouds.

"Next morning, before dawn, was said the Mass for the dead. All night long lighted candles had encircled the heaps of bones.

"The procession left the church at 4 a.m. The parish cross went first, then came the clergy, the celebrant immediately after the cross, all in funeral vestments. The officiant stooped at the shroud and took up a skull, raised it aloft, and this was a token that the translation was inaugurated. Every one of the clergy and assistants followed suit, each took up a bone, even the four choristers in red, who

stooped and gathered bones as they sang, and the crowd streamed after, every member of the procession carrying bones.

"I shall never forget the scene that ensued. Each of the faithful signed himself on the brow, on the eyes, and on the mouth with the bone that he had selected. It was a grey autumnal morning, and the candles of the choir burnt like phosphorescent points of light. The procession moved thrice round the churchyard, and then halted at the pit. Then the officiant placed the first bone in it, and all followed in silence, bowing themselves and gently lowering the fragments, after having kissed them, into the hole.

"This done, the clergy formed a ring about the pit, the celebrant incensed it at the four corners, sprayed it with holy water, and the choir intoned the *Libera* and the *Dies iræ*."\*

I give an illustration of an ossuary taken in May, 1901. It had just been filled; the graves having been dug up after that the bodies had been seven years in the earth. In several cases the skin still adhered to the skulls, and a certain number had the hair almost as fresh as when the bodies were buried. One had rich copper-coloured curls, exuberant and shining. The sexton, when spoken to about it, said, with a shrug of the shoulders, "Mais, monsieur, at an inn the travellers occupy the beds for two, three, four days, then they go; the sheets are changed to receive others. And this is the Hostelry of the Dead. They have to turn out of their beds, and these are made

\* LE GOFFIC, *Sur la Côte*, Paris, 1897, pp. 72-9.



OSUARY, QUESTEMBERT





ready to receive other travellers to the Unknown Land. Voilà!"

Ploumanach, or the Clan of the Monks, consists of a cluster of cottages of fishermen among the pudding-shaped rocks. On a patch of level ground clear of blocks is the chapel of S. Kirec; but the most singular object is the oratory of the saint on a rock in the little bay, that is surrounded by the waves at every tide.

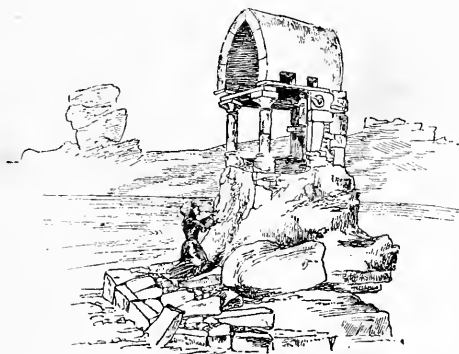


FIG. 31. ORATORY OF S. KIREC, PLOUMANACH

It is a pent-house structure with a back towards the land and open on three sides, sustained by rude eleventh or twelfth century pillars. It contains a wooden image of the saint, which is worm-holed and has lost the hands.

Kirec is the Welsh Curig. He possesses the peculiarity of being the only British saint not of royal birth. In the Celtic church sainthood was an honour reserved for those of the bluest blood. It came about in this way. When a prince or chief died his honours, authority, and lands were equally divided among his

children. This was neither politically advisable nor did it please the ambitious. Consequently the most determined and unscrupulous of the sons said to his brothers, "Go into religion, or I will cut your throats." If they were unable to fight for their inheritance they submitted, and were granted a bit of land and the right to form a tribe out of runaway slaves and foreign refugees.

The appointment to the headship of the saintly tribe was in the hands of the secular chief, and was an appanage of his family. If there were none available to become abbot, then, and then only, were the monks allowed to elect their head; but the newly chosen had to give securities that so soon as one of the royal family was capable of being invested with the headship of the ecclesiastical clan he would surrender his saintship.

How Kirec thrust his way into being the chief of a sacred tribe—in a word, of being a saint—we do not know, he being a mere roturier. But he succeeded, and in that stands alone. We are not told much about him save that he was as rigid a sabbatarian as any disciple of John Knox. We shall meet with him again at S. Pol de Léon.

Further inland is S. Quay, a foundation of Kenan, known as Kea in Cornwall. He came also from Wales, but he had as his mother a daughter of the Irish king of Brecknock. He had to leave Wales when the great upheaval took place among the British against their Irish oppressors. He then went to Cornwall, where the king, Tewdrig, carried off his oxen from the plough. When Kea went to the

palace to complain Tewdrig struck him in the face with his fist and knocked out his front teeth.

A few years after he migrated to Brittany and settled near Perros Guirec. There were snobs in those days as well as in the present, and those who were on their way to place themselves under Kirec halted, to submit themselves instead to the abbot of royal descent. So Kirec found that his position was menaced, and he moved away to Cleguerec.

On high ground stands the chapel of N. D. de la Clarté, a good example of Flamboyant architecture (1544) in its most picturesque mood.

The parish church of Perros has a Romanesque nave with round arches; the arcade on the south side is later than that on the north, which has capitals with cable mouldings. The aisles are singularly narrow. The east window is barbarous, sham Gothic of the end of the seventeenth century. The only side windows are in the south aisle, and are of the same character. There is a traceried porch under the quaint tower of the west end.

S. Quay has a church of Second Pointed work with a good Renaissance tower of 1732.

The Plage de Trestraoun in Perros Guirec is rapidly growing in favour as a watering-place.

Turning south of Lannion, the visitor will do well to break his journey to or from Lannion for a few hours at Plouaret, where he changes carriages.

Here is a church well deserving of study. It is for the most part of Flamboyant work, with a fine south porch, and it has a really admirable Renaissance tower. The church was begun in 1554,

and shows the gradual change of style. The east window is peculiarly interesting. Already feeling against the wavy lines of the flame style was manifesting itself, and the architect endeavoured to recur to a more Geometric pattern; but his hand had not the cunning of the master designers of Second Pointed, and although rich, it is stiff and unskilful in design. The font is of a character common in Breton churches; it has a side stoup on a disengaged pillar with a drain to it, budding out from the font itself.\*

North of the village is the fountain of S. Anne, that gushes from under the roots of an ancient beech tree. It never fails, and near it are the ruins of a chapel. But a more interesting visit will be that made to the Chapel des Sept Saints. On the way the church of Vieux Marché is passed, a stately and beautiful modern example of Flamboyant architecture, all cut in fine-grained granite. Some quaint figure-carving will be noticed near the north door. The road descends into a pretty valley, and climbs the further side that is clothed in broom, and commands a view of the Menez-bré, rounded as a dish-cover, and not rising much over 900 feet.

A new road to the left leads direct to the Chapel of the Seven Saints, rebuilt in 1703-14. The south transept is constructed above a dolmen, to which descent can be made from outside, and one finds one's self in a prehistoric tomb composed of upright slabs

\* The large font was for the conservation of the water blessed on Whitsun Eve, in which were oil and salt. From this limited supply the water was poured over the child held above the small basin.

and covered with huge granite capstones. According to popular opinion none can determine the number of stones of which the monument is composed. This is conceivable enough, on account of the way in which the crevices have been stopped with mortar, and the whole whitewashed, coat over coat, so that it is not easy to discern where one slab ends and another begins.

With the Menez-bré a curious story is associated, but to understand it needs a long preamble, not without interest, and one that it is well to know when travelling in Brittany, as it is connected with several localities and historic personages of the ancient duchy.

Somewhere about 515, when the great migration of the Britons to Armorica was in full swing, a British bard named Hoarvian left his native land and visited the court of Childebert at Paris. He quickly acquired the Frank tongue, and being a skilful improviser, turned his Welsh ballads into bad French, and playing on the British "rote," delighted the ears of the king and of his great nobles.

He might have lived on at court on the royal bounty, but his heart craved for the society of his own people, and leaving Paris, he made his way into Armorica to see how his brethren were getting settled in the land to which they had emigrated. He went to Conmore, the usurping prince who ruled Domnonia, and told him that he had a desire to retire from the world and live as a hermit. However, a day or two after he had made this communication

he was out with Conmore in the woods hunting, when they lighted on a fountain, where a very pretty girl was washing her clothes. Hoarvian halted and spoke to her, and fell desperately in love with the girl, so much so that he entirely abandoned his desire for the life of an anchorite; and he asked Conmore to obtain her for him as wife. The prince laughed and joked with him on this sudden change in his disposition, but Hoarvian explained that the night before he had dreamt that an angel had appeared to him in a dream and had ordered him to marry the first pretty wench who struck his fancy. Conmore accepted the explanation, and the two sought the girl's brother and obtained his consent. Her name was Rivanon. She, however, was by no means disposed to accept the elderly bard, and they were obliged to appeal to the chieftain of her tribe to force her to comply with the wishes of Hoarvian. Then in a fit of furious resentment she cried out, "You may marry me—if you will, but God's curse on the fruit of my womb if I bear a child, and I trust it may never see the light."

The marriage was celebrated, and in due course a son was born, to whom was given the name of Huarvé, and he was blind from his birth. The unnatural mother absolutely refused to nurse him, and life with the husband became so intolerable to her, that both agreed to separate. She went north-west of Brest, to a place since called Lan-rivoaré, where she led a solitary life. Hoarvian also departed, and the poor little blind child was left to be brought up by anyone who would trouble him-

self to do so. He was taken at the age of seven by a monk, who trained him in music and in religion. But when Huarvé was aged fourteen he resolved on going in quest of his wolfish mother, who had deserted him. He visited a cousin named Urfoed, whom the Bretons call S. Urfoe, who lived in a forest, and asked where his mother was. Urfoed bade him remain with him and help him with a school he had founded. Then after a while he led him to Lanrivoaré, where he found his mother sick, and she died in his arms. Having buried her, Huarvé returned to his cousin, and remained with him till Urfoed also died and bequeathed his school to him.

But his blindness interfered with his success; he could not read, and therefore was unqualified for teaching; and the boys took advantage of his infirmity to play tricks and be idle. Consequently he abandoned the school and wandered off in quest of something more congenial. He seems to have inherited his father's bardic talent, and thereby was able to maintain himself. He had found a boy to act as his guide and helper, and he is usually represented with this lad at his side.\*

At last he settled where is now Lanhouarneau, near Plouescat, where he founded a religious community, and, gaining pupils, wandered over the country singing ballads and instructing his pupils. In a word, his com-

\* De la Villemarqué fabricated a romantic ballad about S. Huarvé guided by his little niece Christine, who, when the bard was about to die, begged her uncle to suffer her to attend him to the other world, and died at the same time. Christine actually was the aunt or cousin of Huarvé, and his guide was a boy.

munity was actually one of those bardic peripatetic schools so common among the Celts. S. Samson of Dol heard of him, and opened negotiations with him to obtain the overthrow of the usurper Conmore. Huarvé was easily gained to become a political agent, and he went round in his capacity as a bard stirring the people up to revolt.

When all was ripe Huarvé got together six saints of Brittany, Gildas of Rhuis among them, and all seven ascended the Menez-bré.

Now the Celtic usage was this. When a prince or any great noble was to be denounced to death, seven bards ascended a height where grew a thorn tree, each plucked off a thorn from the tree, and then, all standing back to back about the trunk, stabbed in the air with the thorn, and united in uttering a curse which condemned him against whom the sentence was launched to utter destruction.

This was now done, Huarvé chanting the words of the curse and the rest falling in.

The tidings of what had been done flew like wild-fire, and men fell away from Conmore on all sides. In Celtic opinion such a curse must inevitably produce its result, and when men were convinced that Conmore was predestined to defeat and death very few dared to espouse his cause. The end was that he was killed in battle by Judual, whose claims S. Samson had espoused.\*

\* The historian of the life of Huarvé wrote late, when the usage of bardic condemnation to destruction was a thing of the past, and not understanding what was done, he described it as an ecclesiastical council of seven bishops. But Huarvé was not even a priest, and Gildas was only an abbot.



The blind bard is a favourite saint of the Bretons, who call him Houarnou, and the French Hervé.

His statue may be met with pretty often. He is represented as a hermit, blind, leaning on a staff, with a wolf at his feet, a collar about its neck. Such a statue is at Guimiliau, and there is another at Lescoet.

His elderly kinswoman, Christine, also receives a cult, but the clergy are doing their utmost to drive her out as well as other local saints. She has a chapel at Plougastel-Daoulas, but there she is represented by a fine modern statue as Christina, a Roman martyr, whose story is utterly fabulous.

One of the most picturesque castles in Brittany is near Lannion; it is that of Tonquedec. It consists of an irregular polygon divided into three parts, and with walls of from 9 to 12 feet in thickness, and is flanked by round towers. The ruin owes much to its grand situation. The donjon occupies the point of the promontory that commands the valley. Beneath the castle are numerous vaulted chambers, still accessible.

In the parish church is good glass of the fifteenth century. But the most interesting ecclesiastical edifice in the neighbourhood is the chapel of Kerfons, erected in 1559, that contains, beside old glass, a beautiful rood-screen (*jubé*) of late Flamboyant work, with Renaissance details. These screens were common in the Breton churches, and were their great glories, but most were removed and destroyed in the eighteenth century as standing in the way of the congregation obtaining a full view of the hideous

*baroque* altar-pieces then in fashion and everywhere installed.

The road to Tréguier leaves the village of Trézeni (the *Tref* or homestead of S. Setna) on the left on high ground. There is nothing of interest in the church, but there is a holy well thereby of which a story is told that may amuse the reader.

The surface of the water is somewhat low down, so that a bucket has to be let down to draw up the liquid. Over the well is a structure that has at the back a niche, in which stood formerly the statue of the saint in stone. But what with the friable nature of the material, and what with knocks received from the ascending and descending buckets, the poor saint was so battered and broken as finally to fall from his pedestal to the bottom of the well.

Some of the old people regretted the disappearance of the image, but such as bore devotion to S. Sezny had not the means for providing him with a new statue. As to the peasants with money in their pockets, they cared nothing for the old Irish bishop who had founded their church. So for some years the niche remained empty.

Now one Christmas Eve a farmer, named Joseph le Saint, who was greatly addicted to the bottle, was returning to his home beyond Trézeny from Tréguier about midnight. He was in his trap, and he took up an acquaintance of Rospez on the way. At the branch of the road to Trézeny from the highway stood a public-house. Here the comrade had to descend.

"Let us have a drink together before separating," suggested Le Saint.

The other cheerfully acquiesced ; but, alas ! the tavern was shut, no one was within, all had gone to the midnight Mass.

"This is bad," said Le Saint; "and I feel a sinking within me."

"If I were you," observed his friend, "I'd try a draught of S. Sezny's well. I have heard say that on Christmas Eve at the clang of the sacring bell it is converted to the best champagne."

"I've heard that too," said Joseph. "I'll be off."

Now that night all the good folk of Trézeny were at church, with the exception of one old woman, who remained at home to nurse her grandson, and as she knelt by the bed of the fevered boy she prayed fervently to the saint to cure him.

"Oh ! Monsieur Saint Sezny !" she cried, "if I had but a few francs I would reinstate you in your niche in the well."

When the old woman thought it was about time for the people to be issuing from the church she went to the door, opened it, and stood looking forth into the night. She thought that she heard groans and exclamations issuing from the well. She approached, and asked, "Who is there?"

"It is I—Le Saint !"

"The saint, come to the top of the water after having been immersed so many years ! What a miracle !"

"Sacré, I am Joseph le Saint. I stooped to drink, and went head over heels in."

"Oh ! that drunken rogue ! Fallen in, have you ? Stay where you are and learn the virtues of pure water."

"I shall die of cold."

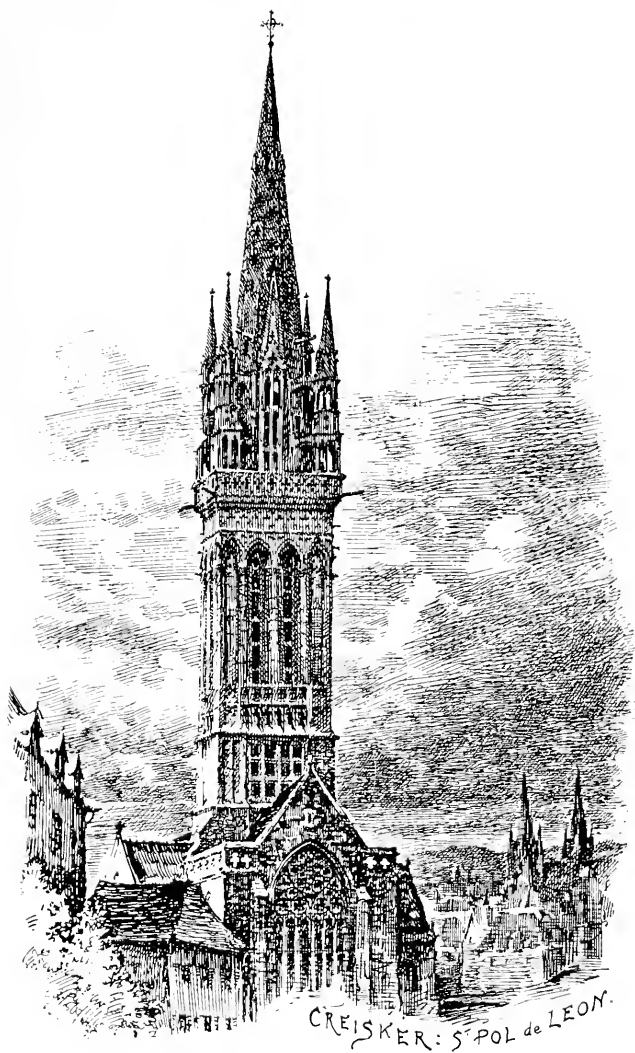
"That is naught to me."

"I cannot sustain myself above the surface."

"Hold!" exclaimed the woman. "Promise me that you will provide a new image of the saint for the niche, and one that shall cost not less than a hundred francs, and I will pull you out. Here come the congregation from the church to witness your oath."

So it came about that a new, gaudily painted saint occupies the niche at this day.

And so gratified was S. Sezny at being thus reinstated that he healed the grandchild, who rose from his bed to tell the story to this day.



CREISKER: S<sup>t</sup> POL de LEON.



## CHAPTER X

### LÉON

The Lyonesse of romance—The people of Léon—The Land of Death—The Ankou—Shipping the dead—Ouessant—Morlaix—Old houses—Capture of Morlaix by the English—A brave maid—Le Taureau—The *Cordelière*—Entry of Mary Queen of Scots—Lanmeur—Story of S. Melor—S. Pol de Léon—Paulus Aurelianus—Steals the bell of King Mark—Arrives in Léon—Founds his monastery—Chapel of Kreisker—The cathedral—Roscoff—Smugglers—Cauliflowers—Landing of Mary Queen of Scots—Ruined chapel of S. Ninian—Church of Roscoff—S. Thégonnec—Guimiliau—Landivisiau—Coast-walk—Pontusval—A prediction—Folgoët—The Blessed Salaun—Carved granite—Canonisation—Now a costly matter.

THE Lyonesse of Arthurian romance is the ancient kingdom of Léon, that comprised, roughly speaking, the arrondissement of Morlaix and that of Brest ; a kingdom that was absorbed into that of Domnonia in or about 530.

It is a region very original in character, and the people in it have got a stamp of their own. They are intensely religious, puritanical even in their gravity and abhorrence of dancing, in which they indulge alone at weddings. They are sedate and solemn, with a Spanish dignity about them. Their costumes are all black, with the exception of those

of the Pagani, who indulge in gaudy colours, and who occupy the coast from Plouescat to Lannilis.

This is the part which is indeed la Bretagne bretonnante, where Death reigns in undivided supremacy and tinctures all existence, every amusement, every occupation; where are the most monumental Calvaries and the most palatial ossuaries.

At Kermaria, near Plouha in Côtes-du-Nord, as already said, is a life-sized Dance of Death; forty personages are represented being jigged into their graves by the King of Terrors. Now here, in Léon, Death stalks, he does not dance, and all men follow him sedately with their eyes lowered and with folded hands through life to the grave of which they never lose the thought.

At La Roche is an ossuary with on it a skeleton armed with a dart levelling at every trade which is represented below, and with the inscription issuing from his mouth, "Il vous tue tous."

Death is personified in Lower Brittany by the *Ankou*, who travels about the country in a cart picking up souls. At night a wain is heard coming along the road with a creaking axle. It halts at a door, and that is the summons. A spirit passes, and the *Ankou* moves on. A curious story is told by an old Byzantine writer concerning the western coast of Finistère. He says that at night a boat lies attached to the shore, and the boatman hears himself called. He goes forth and takes his oars. Then he hears a stirring, and gradually his bark becomes laden, but nothing is seen. When the boat is so charged that it nearly touches the water's edge he puts forth



and rows to one of the islands off the coast, whereat those who are invisible step forth, and his vessel is lightened; and so he returns to the mainland. He has ferried the dead across to the islands in the stormy Atlantic which are the permanent habitation of the souls of the departed.

The great Islands of the Dead were doubtless Ouessant, and Sein, off the Bay des Trépassés in Cornouaille. This latter island in pagan times was occupied by nine virgins who were consulted as oracles, and who were credited with the power of raising or laying storms. None might consult them who were not sailors. Probably with them, as with another college of priestesses in an island in the Loire, it was an obligation on a certain day to pull down and reconstruct the roof of their temple. If by chance one of them let fall any sacred object, any portion of the thatch, her companions rushed on her with hideous cries, tore her limb from limb, and then scattered her blood-stained flesh about the island.

Ouessant was almost certainly also haunted by prophetesses who were consulted; there are remains there of an enclosure that is called the Temple of the Pagans.

Morlaix, the capital town of Finistère, possesses little of beauty or interest to attract the visitor, except some old houses. The only church that deserves notice is the little S. Melaine, with its fine spire, but it is dwarfed by the viaduct which strides past it, crossing the valley.

The old houses are built, something like ancient English inns, about a small quadrangle lighted from

above, and with balconies communicating with the several rooms opening out of them. The staircases to these balconies are usually richly carved.

"If bitten, bite again" is the motto of the town, and it has often had teeth fastened in it and has returned the bite.

During the War of Succession it underwent frightful calamities. The Duke of Montfort having obtained possession of it by a trick, hanged fifty of its principal citizens, who had been placed in his hands as hostages. This so exasperated the townsfolk that they rose against the garrison of five hundred men, and put all to the sword.

In 1522 Henry VIII. of England despatched a fleet to Morlaix. A traitor in the town sent a message to the English admiral with instructions how he might surprise the place. The English entered and set it on fire and returned laden with spoils to their vessels. Six or seven hundred, however, remained behind, intent on plunder, or overcome with wine, and fell victims to their rapacity. On this occasion a servant girl in a house in the Grande Rue, who was left alone there, did good service against the enemy. In the entrance was a trap to the cellar; this she raised, and by lifting a sluice flooded the vaults. The English soldiers, mad with drink, crowded in at the door and fell headlong into the cellar. It is said that some seventy were drowned before those pressing on from behind became aware of the danger. When this was discovered the soldiers pursued the girl upstairs to the attics, and when they found her threw her out of a window on the pikes of their fellows below.

As a protection to the town against the English, the fortress called *Le Taureau* was erected on a rock before the harbour.

From this port sailed the *Cordelière* in 1513, a privateer under the command of Captain Primaguët, who did vast damage to English commerce, till one day she was engaged by the *Regent* and set on fire; thereupon Primaguët, knowing that he could not save his vessel, grappled the English frigate, set it on fire, and both blew up together.

It was at Morlaix in 1548 that Mary Queen of Scots, after disembarking at Roscoff, arrived to marry the Dauphin, afterwards Francis II. The Seigneur de Rohan, at the head of the Breton nobility, received her. After a *Te Deum*, sung in the church of Notre Dame, the royal procession was about to pass over the drawbridge into the castle, when it gave way under the weight of the horsemen upon it. The Scotch guard at once shouted, "Treason! treason!" and drew their swords. But the Seigneur de Rohan, who walked beside the Queen, turned and said, "Jamais Breton ne fit trahison," and the tumult was allayed.

To the east of Morlaix is Lanmeur (*Lann-mawr*, the Great Church), where there is a tenth-century crypt that contains a holy well under the church. The crypt was where, in still earlier times than its construction, was the tomb of a prince of Cornouaille called Melor, whose story is sufficiently tragic. He was son of Meliau, who reigned over that portion of Brittany called Cornouaille from 530 to 537, when he was treacherously stabbed to

the heart by his brother Rivold, who coveted his place. No sooner was Meliau dead than Rivold seized on his son Melor and cut off his right hand and left foot. The object of this mutilation was to incapacitate him from reigning, as by Celtic law no one with any bodily blemish was qualified to be eligible for the sovereignty.

Melor took refuge at Quimper, where some cunning man made for him artificial members to take the place of those which had been amputated. Legend has it that the hand was of silver and the foot of bronze.

A great amount of sympathy was aroused for the unfortunate victim of Rivold's ambition, and the usurper became alarmed, and deemed it advisable to have the lad put out of the way entirely. He consulted with Cerealtan, who had been Melor's foster-father, and one against whom the boy entertained no suspicions, and bribed him to kill the young prince.

Cerealtan confided his project to his wife, who, horror-struck, fled with Melor to Beuzit and placed him under the protection of Conmore, Count of Pohér and usurper of Domnonia, who had married the sister of Meliau.

Cerealtan, eager after the promised reward, visited his foster-son there, and disarmed his fears and those of the aunt, so that he and his son Justan were put to sleep in the same room with Melor.

During the night the wretched man killed the prince, cut off his head, and with his son escaped by the window. The latter, however, missed his

hold and fell and broke his neck. Cerealtan went off with his prize, laid it at the feet of Rivold, and demanded his reward. "I promised you," said the usurper, "as much land as you could see from the summit of the nearest hill. Good! you shall have it, but first of all I will put out your eyes."

The body of the murdered prince was laid at Lanmeur, but in the time of the incursion of the Northmen was carried by some emigrant Bretons to England and laid at Amesbury. Several churches in the west of England have been dedicated to the boy-martyr of Brittany. Now only a statue representing him remains in the crypt in Lanmeur.

If Morlaix be an uninteresting place, this can in no way be said of S. Pol de Léon, which is reached by a branch line.

S. Pol, or Paulus Aurelianus, was a native of Glamorganshire. He was born about the year 480, and was summoned by a prince of the name of Mark to regulate the religious affairs of his little realm. Where this was we do not well know; whether this was the Mark, husband of the fair and frail Yseult, or another we are not informed. However, Paul had a quarrel with the king over a hammered bronze bell, which Paul wanted and the king would not surrender. Paul stole the treasured bell and made a bolt with it to Brittany. With him were not only twelve priests of his community, but also twelve laymen of noble birth, with their wives and families, all Paul's kinsmen, and a large number of serfs and retainers. They landed at first in the island of Ouessant, where Lampaul (*Lann-Paul*) still bears his name, but such

a storm-swept island did not suit him, and after a few months' tarry there he crossed to the mainland, and a good many of his lay attendants settled and founded *plous* in the neighbourhood of Lampaul and Ploudalmezeau. There he spent two years; after that he went to the Isle of Brehat to visit the British chieftain Gwithur from his own part of South Wales, who had established himself as prince over Léon.

He found him, very aged, reading a book of the gospels. The old Welshman welcomed him with enthusiasm, and entreated him to give ecclesiastical organisation to the large colony that had settled in Lyonesse, and recommended him to found a *lann* and make his headquarters among the ruins of an old Gallo-Roman town where now stands S. Pol de Léon. Paul visited the spot and found that a good part of the ancient walls was standing, but within the enclosure all was overgrown with brambles. He set vigorously to work to clear the ground, and there constituted the monastery which was the centre whence radiated his missions throughout the country. Here he was visited by Judual, whom S. Samson had placed on the throne of Domnonia, in 555. Paul was then very aged. The pious prince gave him jurisdiction over a considerable tract of country—the harbour of Penpaul, and the parishes of Roscoff, Santec, and Trégoudern, which thenceforth composed the minster, or sanctuary of S. Paul.

The old Welsh apostle lived to a great age, and was so thin and wasted that it was said that the sunlight passed through his hand as if it were

dull glass. He died in 572. The bell he carried off with him from King Mark is still preserved in the cathedral, and is reputed to be miraculous.\*

The cathedral is of various dates. A part of the transept belongs to the twelfth century; the two towers and spires to the thirteenth, as also the nave; but the western façade, the central spire, and the choir are Flamboyant work, and were erected between 1431 and 1450. In the choir are some five stalls, of the date 1512.

The chapel of Kreisker has a fine tower and spire of the fourteenth century. It is thought to be the finest in Brittany. But it is topheavy; the eight four-staged turrets surmounted by spirelets that surround the central spire are too cumbrous for the tower that sustains them.

The chapel marks a spot granted to S. Kirec by a lady whom he had reproved for washing clothes on a Sunday, and who fell ill shortly after, and supposed it was due to her disregard of the saint's rebuke. The chapel has a beautiful north porch, with pigs trotting round in the mouldings of the archway. The internal arrangement is peculiar, the returned stalls being in the nave, a use by no means uncommon in Spain, but in England only seen in Westminster Abbey, and in France equally rare. The east window contains poor modern glass

\* In the legend it is said that Paul asked for the bell, but was refused it, and therefore in a huff deserted his charge of the people in the principality of King Mark, and that when he reached Brittany a fish was brought to table with the bell in its stomach. This is nonsense. That S. Paul ran away with it seems to be the truth of the matter. The bell is almost certainly of the sixth century.

that reproduces older figures of Breton saints. The windows of the church are all of the Flamboyant period, but at its decline when a revulsion occurred against the feebleness of leaf-like tracery, and there was a recurrence to Geometrical design.

The old cathedral of S. Pol has a western façade and towers of First Pointed. The nave is Second Pointed, with pillars and arcades of remarkable beauty. The transepts have eastern aisles, and that to the south possesses a fine Second Pointed (Geometrical) window with a rose.

The apse and choir are Flamboyant, and the latter has double aisles on both sides. On the north side is the chapel of S. Paul of Léon, where are preserved his head, a hand, and his bell.

Outside at the west end is a gallery above the porch, from which the people were blessed at the "pardon," and on the south side of the transept is another gallery from which excommunications were pronounced.

The cemetery possesses several ossuaries of no particular interest, and a chapel, formerly the church of S. Pierre, a good example of an unpretentious Second Pointed village church; but it has a barbarous Louis XIV. west tower.

From S. Pol an easy walk may be taken to Roscoff, and a ruined *allée couverte* and a dolmen visited on the way where the high-road crosses the line.

Roscoff was the great seat of contraband trade during the European war. Smugglers from England came over in large numbers laden with sugar, spices, coffee, into the creeks of Brittany, and unloaded



secretly; then, when they had discharged their burdens, went openly to Roscoff to take in fresh cargoes of spirits. These were always supplied in kegs such as one man could carry, and each keg was furnished with ropes round it with loops, so that the arms might be slipped through these latter, and the little cask be carried on the back.

Now the entire district round is given up to the production of cauliflowers and broccoli, which are shipped to England and Scotland.

It was here that Mary Stuart landed when on her way to be married to the Dauphin, and she had a chapel erected on the spot and dedicated to S. Ninian, the apostle of the Scotch. The roof was torn off at the Revolution, and the chapel is now a ruin, beplastered with advertisements of "Byrrh," "Magge," of sewing machines and bicycles.

The parish church is late Flamboyant, with a western tower and porch Renaissance, and very fine. There are curious carvings of ships on the walls of the church, and the tower is furnished with stone culverins that serve as gargoyles.

There are two ossuaries in the churchyard; one of the seventeenth century is richly ornamented. I happened to visit the church in January, when a side chapel was converted into a *crèche*. The wise men led by the star were duly represented, along with camels and horses, approaching the stable of Bethlehem, but the procession of visitors to the manger wound up with figures of Breton peasants in costume, and a French soldier in his baggy red trousers and blue coat and military cap. Some

beautiful alabaster sculpture representing the sacred story, and of the fourteenth century, admirably preserved, is kept under glass in the church. It formerly belonged to an altar-piece.

The whole of the coast is here much indented ; the tide falls 27 feet, and leaves vast tracts of sand, and sea and sands bristle with rocks. The island of Batz protects the little harbour of Roscoff from the north-westerly gales.

There are several very remarkable churches that may be visited without much difficulty from the line between Morlaix and Landernau.

S. Thégonnec possesses a very interesting collection of structures. The church was rebuilt early in the seventeenth century, and has the characteristic qualities of the granite Breton churches of the period. In addition there is an ossuary of 1581, adjoining a Calvaire, and a sort of triumphal arch. The whole group is most quaint and picturesque.

But Guimiliau is quite as interesting; the triumphal arch and the ossuary are not equal to those of S. Thégonnec, but the Calvaire is finer. It dates from 1581-8, and on it is represented the whole of the gospel story in a crowd of rude but vigorously executed statuettes. A stair leads to the platform on which is the cross.

Landivisiau unhappily has a modern church, but the magnificent portal of 1554 has been preserved as well as the tower of 1590, and the ossuary with quaint caryatides supporting a richly designed and sculptured cornice. The old graveyard around the church has ceased to be used, and the ossuary has

been transported to the new cemetery. At a distance of six miles is Lambader, with a chapel of the fifteenth century, and a wonderfully rich rood-screen of oak, set up in 1481.

Those who can cycle, or are good walkers, should make for Lannilis from S. Pol de Léon. There are branch lines from the main artery of traffic to Brest, that lead to Lannilis and to Plounéour-Trez; but the walker or cyclist can start from S. Pol, take Plouescat on his way, then go to Lesneven and see the chapel of Folgoët, and thence by a good road make for Lannilis. By this course he will see the country of the Pagani, formerly of evil repute as inveterate wreckers, and visit some interesting churches.

Pontusval is the extreme northern point reached by the branch line from Landerneau. Here is the crag of Castel Lonel. It is amusing at this time to read the lucubrations of the traveller Cambry, who was here in 1795, and published his account of Finistère in 1799. He died in 1807.

"At this spot," he says, "one is not twenty leagues from Plymouth. I pictured to myself the agitation produced in England by our Revolution, her manufactures annihilated, her military power reduced to naught. It is impossible that the convulsive condition of the country should continue. This generation will inevitably see the immense scaffolding on which the power of England has been reared fall in ruin to the ground. The ferment of revolt which has been repressed during a hundred and fifty years, ever active, always smouldering, must burst forth at last, and the convulsions of France

will assume in England proportions far greater, will rage with mightier fury than with us. England's credit, resting on no solid basis, will be dissipated; her imports, necessary to her existence, will fail. Pride will have provoked her downfall. Her manor-houses will become a prey to flames, her estates will be parcelled up, her fugitives will seek on foreign soil a hospitality that will be refused them. Alas! how the direful passion for revenge reigns in the heart of man and makes him look forward to such a catastrophe. Does he consider what the result of the accomplishment of his hopes will entail? Towns destroyed, mothers with their children starving, the landowner wandering homeless in forests, his brother rejecting his appeal and delivering him over to the executioner; the soldier stains his sword with crime, the magistrate loses all authority, and the court of justice having no longer credit, will multiply its efforts to compel submission, regardless of all morality. Barbarous England! this is the condition of affairs awaiting you, if you do not expel the abominable spirit which urges you to bathe land and sea with blood in quest of empty glory and imaginary omnipotence."

Amusing reading this in 1901!

At Kerjean is one of the finest castles in Brittany, in which two distinct styles are happily to be seen side by side, the Norman type of fortress and the château of the reign of Henry IV.

The church of Notre Dame de Folgoët is one of the richest examples of late Gothic architecture in Brittany. It owes its origin to a popular cult that

has sprung up about the tomb of an idiot, Salaun, who lived in the fourteenth century. When he was alive nothing was thought of him ; he was so imbecile that all he could say was "Ave Maria," which he repeated like a parrot. He was quite harmless, and subsisted on charity, and had his habitation in a wood. When he died he was buried in the little churchyard, and because a lily sprang up over his grave it was concluded that he must have been a saint, and imaginative persons pretended to see in the spots on the petals something that might be taken to stand for "Ave Maria."

Just the same story is told of a chapel near Innsbruck. Then the place became a resort of pilgrims, and money flowed in. Miracles were supposed to have been wrought at the intercession of the "Fool of the Woods," and saints become fashionable as well as bonnets. There was a run on Folgoët, and the noble church was erected and consecrated in 1419. It was made collegiate by Duke Jean V. in 1423. To this day it is the object of one of the most celebrated pilgrimages of Brittany.

The fountain of the Blessed Salaun flows from under the high altar, and is received in a basin outside the east end. The church contains some magnificent and exquisitely delicate carved work in granite.

It is remarkable that in Brittany, as at Limoges, the use of granite as a material for sculpture never failed. There is Romanesque work in that stone, and it was employed throughout the Middle Ages. This was not the case in England in granitic districts ;

there—after the very early crosses with interlaced work on them—granite was totally discarded, and it was not till the middle of the fifteenth century that it again came in vogue, and in the counties of Devon and Cornwall was thenceforth the favourite material for pillars, windows, fireplaces, and gateways.

This was due to the much finer texture of the Brittany and Limousin granites and the absence of great pieces of felspar.

To return to the Blessed Salaun. His is one of the many instances of the making of saints by the popular voice. We have had another in that of Charles of Blois, and another even grosser in that of Solomon, King of Brittany.

Canonisation is actually a comparatively modern regulation by Rome of a custom that was usual everywhere. Very generally the common people made up their minds as to who was a saint. S. Martin of Tours found that his people had elevated into a martyr a highway robber, who had been executed for his crimes, and were invoking him, and recording miraculous cures wrought at his tomb. Guibert of Nogent tells us of a case that came under his own notice of a drunken man who was drowned, and was at once, by popular acclamation, declared to be a saint. In every place, said Guibert, old women canonise new saints by inventing all sorts of gossiping stories about them. In Iceland the parliament of the island, by vote, decided that their deceased bishop, Thorlak, should be esteemed a saint, and be commemorated in the Church as such. The earliest instance of formal canonisation that can be found is

that of Ulric of Augsburg, whom the council assembled at the Lateran in 993 pronounced to be a saint. Already, in the Synod of Aix-la-Chapelle in 789, the veneration of fictitious martyrs had been forbidden ; and in those of Frankfort in 794, and Aix in or about 803, the introduction of the cult of unauthorised saints had been condemned.

It was clearly advisable that some order should be introduced into the system, and that canonisation should not be left to old women and weak-minded and ignorant peasants. The bishops took the matter into their own hands, and each bishop decided who should be commemorated in his diocese. Then the finger of Rome was introduced into the pie, but it was not till 1634 that the Pope reserved to himself the exclusive right to pronounce judgment on who were to receive public veneration. Thenceforth it became largely a matter of money, and only wealthy families or communities can afford the fees inseparably connected with a canonisation. "God deliver us from another saint in our family," said Prince Borgia, after the beatification of the Princess had been brought about. "Another will ruin us completely."

## CHAPTER XI

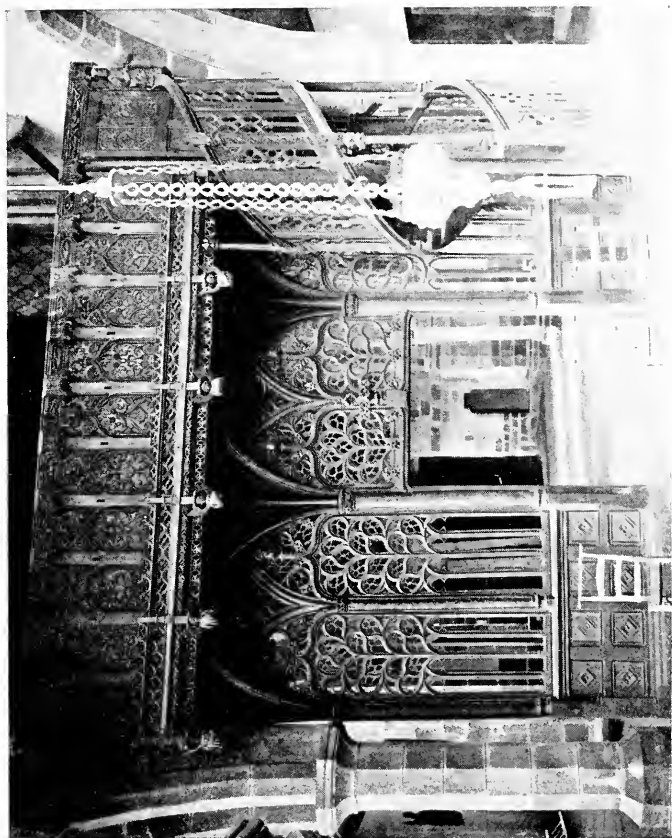
### BREST

A modern town—Travelling in Brittany—A visitor to the Exposition of 1900—Plougastel—Marriages there—The costume—The Calvaire—Dances—The *Barzas breiz* of De la Villemarqué—How he was taken in—The biniou—The ping-pong—Breton music—Pardons—Dirinon—S. Nonna—Rumengol—Daoulas—Landevennec—S. Winwaloe—Forged charters—Strawberries—An anti-British grocer—Churches on the Elorn—Neventer and Rioc.

BREST is a town in itself of no interest except to such as are curious to see life in a seaport, and to observe the ironclads in the harbour. The beautiful bay is an inland salt-water lake with three branches, and communicates with the ocean by the Goulet. It is about twelve miles long by four wide. The entrance is illumined by four lighthouses, and defended by numerous forts. The dockyard can only be visited if a *permit* has been granted, and an Englishman will find some difficulty in obtaining one. Moreover, such sights can be inspected at home.

The only advantage Brest offers to a visitor is that it serves as a starting-point for excursions, and he is sure there of comfortable inns. But for the matter of that, one may be sure of finding cleanliness and





KOOD-SCREEN, LAMBADER. 1481



good food in every village inn in Brittany, and if the sanitary arrangements are not "up to date," they are incomparably superior to those in the south of France. The innkeepers are obliging, and eager to do their best; and where the traveller is courteous and willing to be pleased, he is sure of finding hearty reciprocation. The Bretons are an honest and kindly folk, and it is only at the fashionable watering-places that they are losing their simplicity, and becoming extortionate in their charges.

A good story was told in 1900 of a Breton well-to-do farmer who visited the Paris Exposition, that illustrates the childlike trust and simplicity of the people. The story is true. The man came to Paris from near Brest, and his name is well known, nor is the story likely to be forgotten by his fellow-villagers. Fired with ambition to see the world-fair, this good man, whom we will call Salaun, put all the money he could spare into his purse, assumed his gala clothes, and took a return ticket from Brest to Paris.

On his arrival at the metropolis he looked about him in bewilderment, when, noticing a *curé* in his cassock at the station, he approached him, and asked counsel.

"Now see here!" said the priest, "you are a stranger, and the hotels in Paris are extortionate in their charges. Six francs for a bed. I know a quiet little tavern where you can put up for one franc. I am going there. Come with me."

A priest is the natural friend and adviser of the Breton peasant, and receives absolute trust. So Salaun followed his new acquaintance.

Said the *curé* to him, "I, as a country parson, can go for nothing into all the side-shows, and unless you see them you see naught. Take my advice. I have an old and shabby cassock which I will lend you. Divest yourself of your best suit and assume the clerical habit. Your Breton wide-awake will pass muster. Then leave all your money behind in your valise, for the Exposition swarms with the most dexterous pickpockets."

Salaun gladly accepted the offer, and went forth habited as a poor village *curé*. His friend passed him into the exhibition building and then disappeared. The peasant was not surprised, as the throng was great, but he was disconcerted at finding that his habit did not free him to the side-shows.

After several hours spent in the building, Salaun became ravenously hungry, but could get no refreshment, as his purse was left at his lodgings. At last, unable to endure longer, he left the Exhibition and returned to the tavern, to find that his valise and money and best suit had all disappeared. The taverner stormed for payment, and the peasant had to surrender his watch to defray his night's lodgings and supper. Happily he still retained his return ticket, and with that he took the train for Brest.

He reached his home late at night, glad to steal through the village in his cassock unobserved. On reaching the farm he hammered at his door. The old wife was in bed. "Aha!" said she, "thieves are here. They know that my good man is in Paris, and think to rob the house; I'll not let them in," and she pulled the sheets over her ears.





A FISHER BOY

The more the hammering continued the more resolute was she not to open. At last her husband desisted, and went to the cowhouse for a little rest. But at dawn he was again knocking at the door. Then the woman peered forth and saw, as she supposed, the *curé* seeking admission. "Scandalous!" she exclaimed. "Who would have thought it of his reverence? What things men are!" Then she shouted, "Monsieur le Curé, go away; there is no one dying in here."

"But," replied the man, "there is one dying outside—of hunger."

Then only did she recognise her husband's voice. It goes without saying that Salaun has had a bad time since.

One of the first and most interesting visits should be made to Plougastel, that occupies a tongue of land between the estuaries of the Elorn and the Faou rivers. Here the people cling tenaciously to their ancient customs and costumes. The latter are, however, only to be seen in their full beauty and richness on gala days.

At Plougastel all the marriages in the year take place on one day in the year, in the week of the Epiphany. In 1899 forty-six couples were then united; in 1901 I was present at the wedding of twenty couples. In Lower Brittany it is usual to have the marriages in the winter, so as not to interfere with the work of the fields and the fisheries.

On the occasion of my visit the weddings took place at nine o'clock in the morning. Before dawn carts and traps of all sorts arrived from the country about,

bringing kinsmen and friends, and the street swarmed with men and women in their gayest costume. The men wear violet or blue jackets and three waistcoats, the uppermost of green, and fastened by a single button. About their throats are gay silk kerchiefs of mingled green and violet. Sashes are bound around their waists. They wear black trousers in winter, but white in summer, so tight about the ankles that it is a wonder how they get into them. On their heads are black wide-awakes, with long black velvet streamers falling down their backs.

The women wear white coifs that fall over their shoulders. Their bodices are richly embroidered in silk, and over their skirts they have broad blue aprons. Occasionally the skirts are blue. About their waists are broad ribbons of interwoven silk in many colours over gold-foil. Their stockings have clocks and heels of colour.

All the couples are ranged at the altar-rail, the bridegrooms being led up by the hand by their best men, and the brides by their fathers. A tall taper is affixed burning before each couple. After the simple benediction of their clasped hands, the *Veni Creator* is sung and the Mass of the Holy Ghost is said.

Bride and bridegroom do not leave the church together ; the men depart first and then all the women ripple down the flight of steps from the porch, with their white coifs and glittering ribbons composing a picture of admirable beauty and quaintness.

The church itself is modern and passable, but possesses outside a Calvaire of carved granite and dark



Kersanton stone, crowded with figures that represent in groups the gospel story.

All the day feasting goes on in the houses of those who have been married, and, indeed, this feasting continues for nearly a week. Everyone is welcome, and the poor and the beggars receive what they want. The final meal is that of the *curés*, when the young people are for the most part absent, and the elders and the parsons close the week of jollification by soberly hob-nobbing together.

In Northern Finistère there is not any dancing except at weddings, and then not much.

"Le clergé nous domine," said the host to me ; "quand même, on fait des bêtises."

Human nature is the same everywhere, but I doubt if anywhere it is more disciplined and self-restrained than in Catholic Brittany. One has but to look at the pure faces of the girls, and note how respectable all the marriages are, not to draw a painful and humiliating contrast with those of the same blood elsewhere.

A tree is known by its fruit, but there are fruits of different kinds. If the fruit of Christianity be cultivated intelligence, then undoubtedly Nonconformist Wales and Cornwall are more prolific than Catholic Brittany ; but if it be innocence and singleness of mind, and a piety that pervades and governs the whole life, then the positions are reversed.

The dances at Plougastel are mainly *gavottes*, and there is no traditional country dance in use. But at a *nôce* one has a chance of hearing some of the guests sing some ancient *souniou* or *gwersiou*. The

former is the lyric or love song and the latter a ballad. And here I may say a few words about the national poetry of the Bretons.

In 1837 M. de la Villemarqué published his *Barzas breiz*, a collection that purported to be made from the lips of the Bretons of their traditional ballads, historical, legendary, and mythological.

The *Barzas breiz* was hailed with enthusiasm in France and was crowned by the Academy.

So years passed, and others, notably M. Luzel, began to collect. Then he found that what he gathered was not quite the same as what De la Villemarqué had given to the world, and that of some of the most interesting historical and poetical pieces not a trace could anywhere be discovered.

De la Villemarqué was an amiable and well-intentioned man, and none suspected him of forgery. But what had taken place was this. He had largely "restored" ballads of which he had picked up mere fragments; he did this without indicating where his restorations came in. Worse than this, he had accepted a budget of contributions forwarded to him by at least one friend whom he trusted, and who had manufactured the pieces and passed them off on the uncritical and unsuspecting De la Villemarqué as genuine antiques.

He was not satisfied without giving to those pieces which he himself heard a fictitious antiquity. For instance, the Bretons have a song strictly like our familiar—

"Sing a song of One O!  
What shall I sing you?"

Now, De la Villemarqué touched it up, adding lines of his own to convert it into a Druidic lesson imparting deep mysteries to a pupil. Not a word of this occurs in the genuine ballad.

The *Barzas breiz*, after having hoaxed the Academy and pretty nearly every English traveller in Brittany, who flies to it to extract padding for his volume of travels, has fallen into disrepute; and although the learned are unwilling to say hard words of a man who sought to popularise the ballads of his native land and dealt with them in a stupid manner, they can trust to the genuineness of no single piece in the collection unless its counterpart can be found in the volumes of M. Luzel.

De la Villemarqué should have named his authorities and have indicated what alterations he had introduced into the text, and should have left copies of the ballads as he received them. But he had the example of such men as Bishop Percy and Sir Walter Scott before him, and he followed their traces. He has been termed the Macpherson of Brittany.

The musical instrument in general use among the Bretons is the *binion*, a bagpipe, but differing in some particulars from the Scottish national instrument. The bagpipe is the most ancient wind instrument in Europe. It was formerly very widely diffused. At Aruns in the Pyrenees is a white marble font, on which is represented in carving a marriage feast of the fifteenth century, and a man is figured thereon playing a bagpipe to the dancers. So also at Marychurch in Devon a bagpipe player is represented;

so also on a bench-end of the fifteenth century at Altarnon in Cornwall. The Breton biniou differs mainly from the Scottish national instrument in this, that the former is played by two persons, one with the chanter or melody pipe, the other has a bag with one drone, and a smaller pipe which he fingers to vary the accompaniment.

The Highland bagpipe is played by one person. It has a chanter for the melody, and there are three drones which lie over the shoulder; these produce the note A, the long one an octave lower than the other two.

There are but two dances that can be considered as national in Brittany, the gavotte and the *ping-pong*. The latter consists in the partners holding each other by the little finger in walking up the line of the *contre-danse* till they find a gap, whereupon they whirl each other round three times, and then saunter forward finger-locked again. It is not a picturesque and pretty dance as is the gavotte.

Breton music is not of a good quality; the popular melodies are poor, miserably so, as compared with those of Ireland, Wales, and Cornwall. And the ecclesiastical music in the churches is rendered badly by harsh voices. Possibly the dismal *biniau* has militated against good music.

There are several "pardons" at Plougastel at the chapels that are peppered about the peninsula; but perhaps the best is that on Midsummer Eve, celebrated with bonfires, and succeeded by the religious observances of the morrow.

At four miles from Plougastel is Dirinon, a church



BRETON DANCE



with a spire of 1593. But the place is specially interesting because of its association with S. David of Wales and his mother.

Nonna was the daughter of an Irish chief who had settled himself in the headland of Pembrokeshire, where is now S. David's. He sent his daughter to the school started by S. Mancen, or Mawgan, at Tygwyn, or the White House, close to the harbour. One day when she was out for a walk Cedig, the Welsh prince, son of Ceredig who had driven the Irish out of what is now called after him Cardiganshire, saw her and carried her off. The result was that she gave fair promise of becoming a mother, and retired to a cottage on the cliffs, of which the contemporary walls remain to this day with a superstructure of mediæval work in stone and mortar. Here she became the mother of S. David.

Meanwhile her sister Gwen had been married to Solomon, King or Duke of Cornwall. In later years Nonna went to see her sister, and was granted a large tract of land on the moors, where she founded a college for girls at Altarnon. Why she left this we know not, but probably she was caught by the wave of desire for emigration which passed over the British at the time, pressed by the Saxons further and ever further west. She then settled here, and here she died. Her tomb is shown in the chapel that bears her name, but the tomb itself is a work of the fifteenth century. Her bones are, however, contained now in a reliquary of enamel-work of an earlier date.

Her holy well is much resorted to still ; it is a

large tank of water enclosed by walls, and with benches about it. The spring itself is under an arched structure of 1623, and in it is a statue of the mother of David. The water flows into three oval basins in succession, and never fails.

About a mile off is also the fountain of S. David ; the building enclosing it is similar to that of Nonna, and contains a statue of the patron saint of Wales of the fourteenth century. There exists a remarkable Breton miracle-play representing the story of Nonna with a frankness very startling. It was enacted by the peasants at their "pardon" till the Revolution, and has not been performed since. God the Father is introduced, and acts and talks, and in other particulars it is objectionable ; it would not be possible to revive the performance unless the text were expurgated.

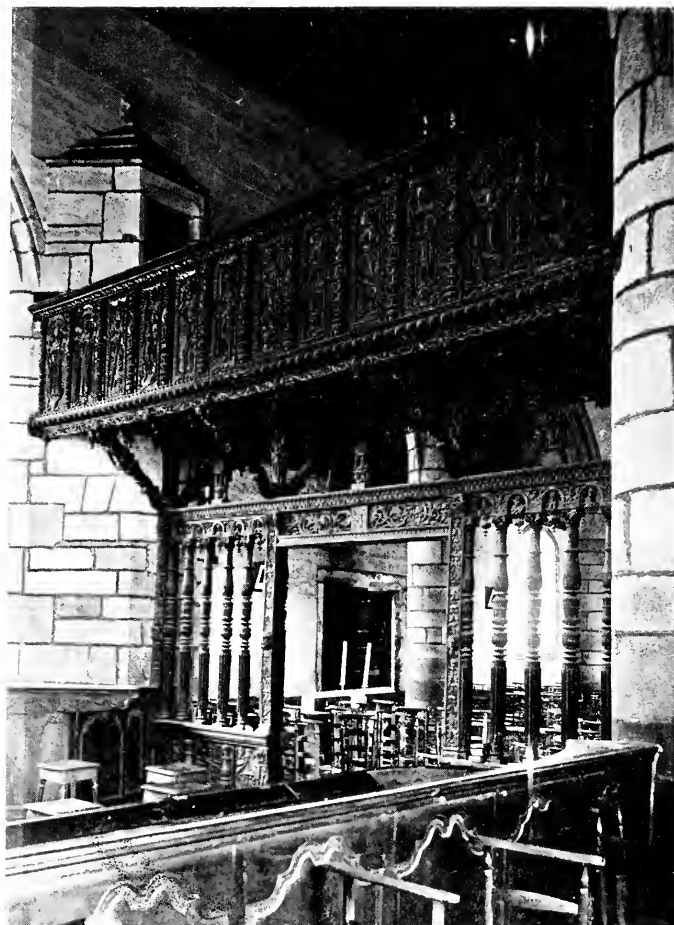
Rumengol should be visited on Trinity Sunday, when is its most famous "pardon" that attracts pilgrims from all parts of Finistère. The church was built in 1536, and is surrounded by ancient pines. Near it is a holy well, the water of which is supposed to cure all manner of complaints, external and internal.

Daoulas is interesting to the architect on account of the remains of a monastery founded there in the sixth century. The church contains much Romanesque work, and there is a very fine roofless cloister. The old porch of the church has been carried off to the cemetery, where is a fine old cross. The ossuary dates from 1589. The chapel of S. Anne is of the sixteenth century, and is worth notice.

Landevennec was once a famous monastery founded







ROOD-SCREEN, LA ROCHE. XVITH CENT.

by King Grallo and S. Winwaloe. The latter was son of Fragan, whom we have seen settled near S. Briec. Winwaloe with a small party of monks settled first of all at Tibidy, a little isle at the mouth of the Faou River. But the place was too strait for him, and one day when the tide was unusually low he called his monks to him and bade them hold hands and follow him.

He went forward with his staff, and with the other hand holding one of his brethren, and thus in a chain they made their way across the precarious sand and mud to the mainland.

Then he persuaded King Grallo to give him Landevennec, on a long strip of land that forces the Châteaulin River to make an abrupt deflexion.

The situation was sheltered, and the writer of the Life of Winwaloe waxes eloquent on its beauty and the sweetness of the climate.

Landevennec became in turn a rich foundation, and unfortunately by unscrupulous means, for the monks in the twelfth century deliberately forged a set of title-deeds to a good many manors that they coveted, and on the strength of these exercised jurisdiction, with rights of life and death, over a considerable district. The cartulary of Landevennec is in existence, and no manner of doubt exists that something like half of the charters therein are fraudulent compositions.

Landevennec is now a ruin. King Grallo was buried in it, but his tomb can no more be distinguished. The ruins are in private grounds, but permission is readily accorded to visitors to inspect them.

The whole of this district, as well as the promontory of Plougastel, is a great fruit-growing region. Strawberries ripen there a month before they do in Kent, and in May and June steamers laden with green peas and strawberries leave daily for England.

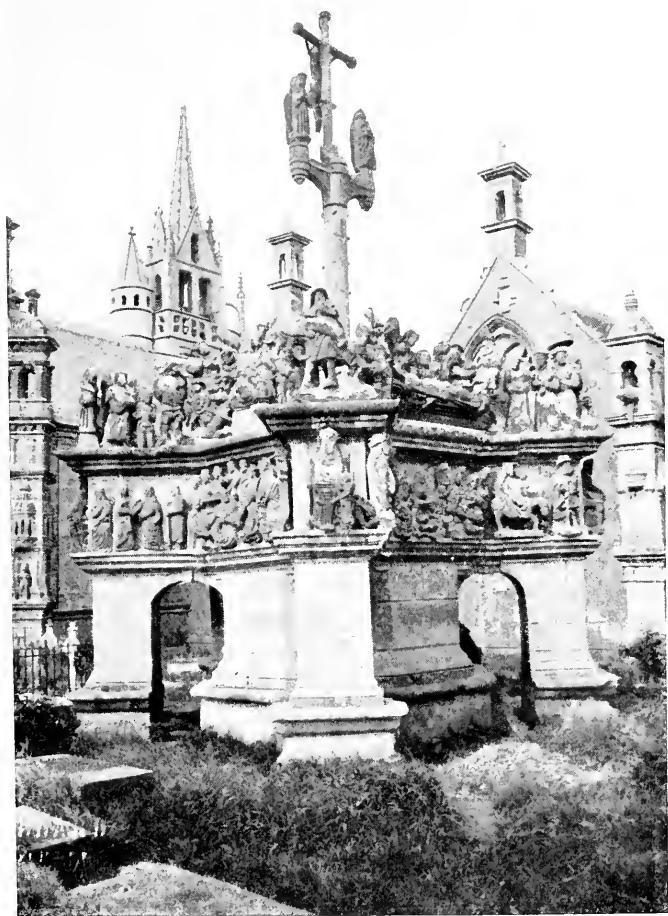
During the strong anti-English fit that took hold of the French after Fashoda and the Dreyfus affair, a grocer distinguished himself by his loud-spoken and savage abuse of the British, "Sacrés marchands de confitures!" he called them.

"But why marchands de confitures?" he was asked.

"Why! because they make the jams that they send to us. And they have no sugar themselves, and no fruit. Sacré! they take *our* sugar and *our* fruit, and they make us buy *their* jams."

The churches in the valley of the Elorn, S. Thégonnec, Guimiliau, Lampaul, La Roche, and Landerneau, are well deserving of a visit. During the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries Brittany was rich, especially Lower Brittany, as vast flocks of sheep were reared on the moors, and enormous quantities of wool were exported. The result of this wealth is seen in the lavishness with which the churches were built and decorated, and supplied with triumphal arches, Calvaries, and ossuaries. Of the magnificent rood-screens then set up but few remain, but one of the finest in purest Renaissance work is at La Roche.

La Roche is a most picturesque spot: a rock of white quartz rises abruptly from the valley, and is crowned by a castle. Near this is the village with



CALVAIRE, GUIMILIAU. 1581



its church and ossuary. A curious story is associated with La Roche.

Among the early settlers from Wales was one Neventer, who established his *plou* on the north side of the river, where is now Plouneventer. One day he was walking by the river, then called the Dournoun, when he saw a man struggling in the water. He at once proceeded to rescue him, and when he had got the fellow out he learned that his name was Elorn, and that he had his castle on the summit of the rock. He had attempted suicide, and the reason was this: He belonged to the original population, the dolmen-builders. Now, everywhere among that people a hideous custom existed, that annually in each tribe a human sacrifice should be offered. A youth or a woman was put to slow torture, and then torn to pieces, and bits of the flesh were distributed throughout the clan, and these gobbets of human flesh were buried in the fields destined to grow corn—the idea being that this horrible rite ensured a good harvest. To determine the annual victim lots were cast, and this year the lot had fallen on Elorn, who was held to be bound to deliver over his son—his only child—to be thus sacrificed. Elorn in despair had sought to destroy himself.

When Neventer ascertained this, he, as head of the dominant race of colonists, abolished the hideous custom. He then endeavoured to convert Elorn to Christianity, but the old chief refused to desert the religion of his ancestors; he, however, suffered his son, Rioc, to embrace it, and finally Rioc entered the monastery of S. Winwaloe at Landevennec.

## CHAPTER XII

### CHÂTEAULIN

A town without a château — Pleyben — S. Ségal — S. Coulitz — S. Bridget — The Montagnes Noires — Menez-hom — Headland of Crozon — Lanveoc — Close relations between Ireland and Brittany — Locronan — S. Rénan — Fingar — S. Tighernac — Irish bards sent to Brittany for a lost poem — The Ossorians and the Hy-Bairrche — The canal from Nantes to Brest.

CHÂTEAULIN is pleasantly situated on the Aulne, which makes snake-like writhings before it reaches the sea. It lies under heights that, for Brittany, are considerable. The principal portion of the town is on the right bank, but the old town is on the left, on which also is the railway station. Châteaulin contradicts its name, for it has no château, the castle having been levelled with the ground, and all that is left of it is the castle chapel, mainly of the Renaissance period. In an adjoining cemetery are an elegant ossuary and a cross of Flamboyant work. On the right bank is the church of S. Idumet, with a spire; it is modern and indifferent.

An excursion may be made to Pleyben, where is a very interesting church which exhibits the transition between Flamboyant Gothic and Renaissance classic





PEASANTESS OF PLOARÉ



architecture. The tall tower has a gallery at the summit surmounted by a central cupola, crowned by a lantern, and there are four domed turrets at the corners. The two other towers are Flamboyant. Before the church is a fine Calvaire sustained on piers and arches, erected in 1650. The date of the south porch is 1588-91. Within the church may be seen rich glass of 1564.

The dedication of S. Ségal is to Cadwalader, the Welsh saint, Abbot of Belz after S. Cadoc, and there is a statue of him in the church; but who would have recognised the name under its strange transformation? or again, suspect that S. Coultiz, near Châteaulin, is dedicated to Conleath, S. Bridget's bishop? One is disposed to ask whether the poor prelate fled to Brittany and founded this church, to be away from petticoat government. According to Celtic ecclesiastical order, the bishops had no jurisdiction unless they were heads of ecclesiastical tribes, but were under subjection to the tribal chief, who may have been a woman. So odd did it seem to mediæval biographers that Bridget should have had a bishop at her beck and call, that they feigned that when she was veiled as a nun by mistake the bishop then read over her the consecration of a bishop.

Bridget, as head of a large ecclesiastical community, had branch institutions in Brittany, as she certainly had in Britain. In Brittany her name is transformed into Berhet, and a funny popular story is told of her. When Mary and Joseph came to Bethlehem, and the Virgin was refused a place in the inn, she felt the pangs of maternity come on her. Then she asked

for female aid, and the taverner's wife roughly answered that none could be spared her, save that of Berhet, a poor maid born without legs or arms. But Berhet wriggled forward to the assistance of the Virgin, and lo! forth sprouted the deficient members.

At Berhet, near Guingamp, where the church is dedicated to her, there is an image holding a hoop set with bells, and this is worked by hidden mechanism, so that during Mass the figure raises its arm and shakes the wheel, making all the bells tingle.

It is possible enough that Bridget may have deputed Conleath to Brittany to see how her branch institutions were faring there.

Conleath's situation under the rod of a woman was a bit humiliating, and at last he expressed a desire to leave. She forbade him, and denounced evil upon him if he ventured to depart unpermitted. However, he stole away in the night, lost his road among the Wicklow mountains and was fallen on and devoured by wolves. "Serve him right!" said Bridget when informed of the fatal event.

To the south of Châteaulin runs the range of the Montagnes Noires, that culminate in the Menez-hom, the highest "mountain" in Lower Brittany, but attaining hardly to a thousand feet. At the foot is the chapel of Ste. Marie, with a Calvary and a good Renaissance tower. From thence the ascent of the Menez-hom can be made in half an hour. It is worth the trouble, as it commands a superb view of the Rade de Brest to the north and the Bay of Douarnenez to the south.

The Montagnes Noires are disappointing. Black mountains they are not. The average altitude is 750 feet. The chain of the Menez runs due east and west athwart Ille-et-Vilaine and Côtes-du-Nord to near Callac, where it forks. The northern branch is the Monts d'Arré, which are bolder than the Montagnes Noires, and more barren and rocky. The latter form the southern prong of the fork. The traveller crosses them without being aware that they are "mountains." A rounded hump reaching 900 feet is regarded as something very great. But the Menez-hom, where the branch comes to an end abruptly, is the giant of this pigmy range. It is just 990 feet high, and resembles a dish-cover. But inasmuch as it rises near the sea, and commands the beautiful Bay of Douarnenez, it is deserving of notice.

The whole headland of Crozon is interesting. There is some fine rock scenery on the coast, with caves and crags quaintly carved by the waves and storms of the Atlantic. They are supposed to be haunted by the Korrigans, or spirits of the sea.

A good many rude stone monuments are scattered over the promontory. At Telgruc is a dolmen ; there is an avenue of standing stones at Kernuz, also at Camaret and at Lanveoc, a foundation of the Irish Fiacc, Bishop of Sletty, a disciple of S. Patrick. When the apostle appeared before the Irish king, Leogaire, at Tara, in 455, the king and all his nobles received him seated, except Fiacc, son of the chief court bard, then a lad of eighteen. He rose to his feet. Patrick afterwards baptised him and then ordained him.

We hardly realise how close was the intercommunication between Ireland, Britain, and Brittany in the fifth and sixth centuries, till we note foundations of great missionaries and abbots in all three. The fact was that Patrick drew those who assisted him in the conversion of Ireland very extensively from Wales and from Armorica, and doubtless had nurseries in Brittany as well as in Cornwall and Wales, whence he could draw helpers as he needed them.

Locronan, near Douarnenez, is another Irish foundation. Ronan spent some time in Cornwall, and then came on to Cornouaille in Brittany, and settled at this place, where he began mission work among the natives, and not among the British settlers. He was eminently successful, till he excited the jealousy of a woman whose husband listened attentively to his teaching, and she began to fear lest the missionary should draw him away from his home duties, and induce him to become a scholar and a monk. Then she went among her neighbours, declaring that Ronan was a werewolf, who every night was transformed into one of these beasts of prey and carried off the sheep from their flocks. She also declared that he had stolen her child from its cradle and had devoured it.

The superstitious people took alarm, and complained to King Grallo. The king was a Christian and a Briton, and he arrested Ronan. To satisfy the angry and excited natives, he proposed that Ronan should be brought forth on a certain day and that he should let loose his hunting dogs upon him,

when, if they snuffed any savour of wolf about him, they would infallibly tear the man to pieces.

In the meantime he allowed the hounds to become familiarised with the Irishman, and made him feed them. Consequently, when the day arrived, and Ronan was exposed before a vast concourse of people, the dogs came about him fawning, and licked his hands and feet. The credulous multitude at once concluded that he had been falsely accused, and when, further, the child of the woman who had brought the charge against him was discovered where she had temporarily concealed it, the conviction of his innocence was completely established, and the natives venerated him as a saint.

The pardon at Locronan has been described in a former chapter. The church, which contains the tomb of Ronan, is an interesting structure, with a massive tower. The little chapel of the saint is beside it. On the pulpit are represented the principal incidents of his life.

Again, another Irish settler was Fingar. He was, as far as can be judged, one of the Hy-Bairrche, a clan in Leinster, which was expelled from the land by the Hy-Cinnselach, and had to take refuge out of the island. Many of them settled about the Land's End, in Cornwall, but Fingar came to Armorica and formed a *plou* where is now Pluvinger in the Morbihan. He had, however, another settlement at Ploudiri in Finistère. He is said to have come over with seven hundred and seventy-seven Irish settlers and seven bishops. He returned to Ireland to bring over a second colony, but was driven by contrary

winds upon the Cornish coast, where the king, Tewdrig, who did not relish such an influx of Irishmen, fell on him and his party, and put him and several of the rest to the sword.

Take yet another, S. Tighernach (Tierny). He had been carried off along with his friend S. Eogain (Eugene) as boys from Wexford by Ceredig, the Welsh Prince of Cardigan, who sold them as slaves. S. Patrick was so wroth at this attack on Ireland and capture of Christians that he wrote a strong letter to Ceredig, whom he calls Coroticus. At the intercession of Mancen, head of the missionary college established at the White House on S. David's Head, Ceredig surrendered the boys to him, and Mancen brought them up to become missionaries. Then a fresh band of pirates entered Porthmawr, sacked the monastery, and carried off the scholars, Tighernach and Eoghain included, and sold them as slaves in Armorica, where one of the petty kings bought them and set them to grind corn for his household.

One morning the steward, not hearing the quern going, looked into the mill and saw the two lads with a Psalter open before them reading the Psalms. He informed the king, who, having a respect for scholarship, at once gave them their liberty and returned them to Mancen at the White House.

In time the two friends went to Ireland, and worked together, but then their paths separated. Eoghain became Bishop of Ardstraw, and Tighernach Bishop of Clones and Clogher. Probably before this, and whilst his family was involved in troubles, to be presently referred to, he returned to Brittany and



founded at least one religious establishment at S. Thégonnec; and probably was also the founder of Landerneau, where he would be near his friend, S. David, and his friend's mother, Nonna. It is perhaps due to him that Loperhet was established in the neighbourhood, named after S. Bridget, who had held him at the font. But if in Armorica he founded a mission college for men, he would certainly plant there another for women, under the rule of his godmother. In the evangelisation of Ireland the clerics were ably seconded by religious women.

I mention these migrations together here, though the colonies founded by Fingar and S. Tighernach are not in the neighbourhood of Châteaulin, that the reader may be able to judge from this group of settlers from the south of Ireland how intimate the relations must have been.

But we have further evidence.

In the middle of the sixth century the bards of Ireland, to their consternation, discovered that one of their famous traditional tales, concerning a cattle raid of some historic importance, was lost. Fragments were to be found, but not the tale entire. After Ireland had been ransacked for it they met in council, in 580, and appointed a commission to proceed to Brittany and visit the Irish settlers there, and inquire whether any of them had carried off a complete copy of the great tale. The commission went to Armorica and returned, having succeeded in recovering the desired work. Now an Irish settler would hardly retire to Brittany and take his light literature with him unless there were other colonists

of his race established there and he expected the Irish bardic tales to be appreciated by them ; as also that there he would reside, and not be a mere bird of passage.

Now it is a curious fact that the Irish saints we find in Lower Brittany belong, as do those who settled in the Land's End district of Cornwall, to two great Irish clans—that of Ossory and that of Hy-Bairrche, who occupied the country between the Slaney and the Barrow.

At the beginning of the sixth century Oengus, King of Munster, conquered Ossory, expelled the royal family, and swept the inhabitants out of the south, which he delivered up to be occupied by the Deisi, who immediately entered on the territory granted to them.

Precisely at this time Ossorian saints appear in Cornwall and in Lower Brittany. Can we doubt that they came over as fugitives, and in order to minister in religion to their fellow Ossorians who were expatriated ?

Then, about the same time, the Hy-Cinnselach, who occupied what is now the county of Wexford, invaded the Hy-Bairrche country, and drove out the entire clan. It is certainly a curious coincidence that we find precisely the saints of this expelled tribe settling at this very time in Brittany and Cornwall.

The river Aulne that flows past Châteaulin has been utilised to form the noble canal connecting Nantes with Brest. It has good quays at Châteaulin, and below, the waters enter the tranquil Rade de Brest. The canal receives the waters of the Aulne

from Carhaix, and then sweeps east to Mur, where it bends south, and at Pontivy is joined by another canal that descends to Lorient, receiving the waters of the Blavet.

Below Carhaix are extensive slate quarries, and barges convey the slates thence that are so largely employed for roofs in Brittany, and are displacing the thatch of broom.

## CHAPTER XIII

### QUIMPER

Foundation of Quimper—Water—S. Corentine—His fish—Origin of the story—The cathedral—Statue of King Grallo—Deflexion of choir—The museum—Church of Locmaria—A vested crucifix—S. Liberata—MM. Le Braz and Luzel—Quimper faience—Mr. Goalen—Wolves—The Bigauden country—Sardine fisheries—Douarnenez—A wheel of fortune—The cross of Constantine—Cleder-Cap-Sizun—Costume—Baie des Trépasséz—The city of Is—Inundations—Subsidence of the land—Pointe du Raz—Primelin and S. Tugen—Bay of Audierne—Blown sand—Old city of Penmarch—Pont l'Abbé—Cornouaille.

THE capital of ancient Cornouaille, and now in the department of Finistère, and seat of the bishop for that department which is coterminous with his diocese, is a bright and pleasing town, beautifully situated on the Odet and the Steir, which here unite, and the paved quays make pleasant walks by the river side.

A word of advice may be appropriate here that does not apply to Quimper alone, but should be followed throughout Brittany. Quimper lies in a hollow, and its water supply was once drawn from wells sunk in a soil sodden with the sewage of centuries. It is now furnished with water brought in a conduit from a distance. In the villages the well is in the yard deep in farm manure. Consequently

it is never advisable to drink water that has not been boiled, and in a hotel one cannot reckon on that. Therefore my counsel is, drink your half-bottle of wine undiluted.

Quimper is the old *Curiosopitum*, a Latinisation of the British name which signifies a *szwf* or collection of *caerau*, camps. It was founded by the British colonists, and had as its first bishop S. Corentin, born about 410, and son of one of these settlers. He was granted lands by Grallo, King of Cornouaille, and appeared at the Council of Angers in 453, and signed its decrees.

Corentin had a little pool, with a spring of water in it, near his cell. By a special miracle there lived in this basin a fish, which served Corentin with a meal every day. He put his hand into the water, drew out the fish, cut off as much of its flesh as he wanted, and threw it back into the well, where it recovered itself before the next meal. Two eminent saints visited him one day. Corentin was in despair. He had flour, and could give them pancakes for dinner; but pancakes, before it was understood how to season them with sugar, nutmeg, and lemon, were thought to be insipid. He went to the fountain to have a look at his fish. It would be like killing the goose that laid the golden eggs if he boiled for his visitors the entire fish. But, to his great joy, he found the spring full of plump eels. He cooked them for dinner in light wine; and his visitors left, praising heaven for having given them so dainty a meal.

However, one day King Grallo lost his way when hunting, and arrived hungry at the cell of the saint.

Corentin was then obliged to cut an unduly large slice out of the back of his fish. The king's cook, without whom Grallo prudently did not lose himself, scoffed at the small supply ; but as he began to fry the slice of fish it multiplied in the pan sufficiently to satisfy the king and all who came to the hermitage. Grallo was naturally curious to see the fish itself, and Corentin took him to the fountain, where they found the creature frolicking about quite uninjured. This is why in Quimper Cathedral and elsewhere in the diocese the bishop is represented accompanied by his fish.

The story is unquestionably an adaptation of a pagan myth which we obtain in old Irish. The fish was the "Salmon of Science" that lived in the "Fountain of Coppla." Over the well grew hazel trees that dropped their nuts into the water, where they were consumed by the salmon, and the fish became endowed with all the wisdom and knowledge contained in the nuts. As late as 1400 an Irish poet, Aengus Finn, says of the Virgin Mary, "She is the Salmon of Science."

Now the salmon in the pool is the golden sun that swims in the blue lake of the heavens, which dies every evening and reappears every morn. And in the legend of S. Corentin we have this nature-myth applied to him.

The cathedral of Quimper is a glorious building. The choir is of the Geometrical style of the thirteenth century. It was, in fact, begun in 1239. The nave and towers were begun in 1424, and the spires were only erected in 1854-6. These spires are altogether





CALVAIRE, QUILLINEN



admirable. The towers themselves are not so satisfactory; they are cut down almost to the roots by the long belfry windows, and have something of the look of an overgrown Irish yew, with four shoots that would fall apart and split unless tied together at the head. The appearance would have been better had the towers and the windows been broken into stages.

Over the west gable is the equestrian statue of King Grallo. It was customary, on the great day of the pardon, for a man to conceal himself behind the statue, and at a given moment present a glass of wine to the lips of the stone king. Then the fellow drank off the draught himself, and tossed the tumbler among the crowd, whereupon everyone sought to catch it, for he who succeeded in so doing before it touched the ground was supposed to ensure to himself overflowing luck for the ensuing twelvemonth.

On entering the church the deflexion of the choir from the axis of the nave is at once noticed; it leans to the north, and is the more noticeable as the groining of Quimper Cathedral possesses the feature, unusual in France and general in England, of a central rib. Bayonne Cathedral, that was built under English domination and by English architects, also has it.

The deflecting of the choir is thought to represent the leaning of Christ's head on the cross to one side; it is not invariably to the north, and it may be questioned whether it does not often arise from the fact of nave and choir being constructed at different periods, and of there being a little carelessness in determining the true axis of that part of the building which was intended to remain.

The clerestory windows throughout are filled with ancient stained glass; the lower windows are modern and of the usual flaring style.

North of the cathedral is the museum, that not only contains a good picture gallery and a collection of antiquities, but a well-set-up group of peasants in plaster, in the several costumes of Finistère, representing a wedding. Good photographs of the Breton costumes and churches may be had from M. Villard, Rue S. François.

Half a mile down the river on the left bank is the church of Locmaria, that is a fine example of Romanesque of the eleventh century, and consists, as did most of the churches of the period, of a bold central tower, with transepts, an apse and side chapels that are apsidal, a nave with side aisles. The eastern part of the church has been rebuilt, but on the old lines. An unimportant Flamboyant porch has been added at the west end.

Over the rood-beam is a clothed figure of Christ on the cross. These long-robed figures belong to the earliest representations of the crucifixion, and although this specimen is not of the eleventh century, yet it is a reproduction of the primitive crucifix of the church.

Such clothed figures have a curious story. After the eleventh century they were given up for such as are nude, with only the loin-cloth; and these became so general, that the people could no longer understand the meaning of the earlier representations, and supposed, as the garments reached to the feet, that they implied that the person represented was

a female. But then, how account for the beard? The following story came into circulation, no one knows well how.

There was once upon a time a King of Portugal who had a beautiful daughter called Liberata, and he purposed marrying her to a king—if not of Spain, yet one who had his “*château en Espagne.*” But Liberata had vowed herself to celibacy. She was unable to move her father to reconsider his determination, so she had recourse to prayer, whereupon a copious beard and moustache sprouted. When the suitor arrived and saw the hairy damsel he bolted, and the King of Portugal in a fury crucified his daughter.

Now these long-clothed crucifixes came into fashion with wives who sought to get rid of their husbands, and S. Liberata, Wilgefortis or Uncumber as she was called in England and Flanders, was appealed to for this purpose.

In 1868 I strolled one day into the charnel-house of a little village above Brieg, in the Rhone valley, when I was startled to see a tall, dressed figure, with a straw hat on her head and arms extended, apparently making towards me. On examination the figure proved to be one of Liberata; and on inquiry I learned that the scandal of wives appealing to her to rid them of their drunken sots of husbands had become so gross, that the village priest had bundled the bearded lady out of his church, and had consigned her to the old bone-house among useless lumber. Whether the good women of Quimper stroll down to Locmaria to put up their prayers to

this robed and bearded figure when their husbands have been particularly aggravating I am not in a position to say.

One of the misereres in Westminster Abbey bears a representation of S. Uncumber.

Quimper is the seat of the intellectual culture of Finistère, and the ablest students of Breton antiquities and collectors of traditional ballads and traditions, as M. le Braz and M. Luzel, live or lived there. The former has rendered valuable service to his country by his charming studies of Breton life, his poems, and his stories; and M. Luzel, now dead, took infinite pains to collect the genuine folk-poetry of the country. Canon Abgrall is the best authority on the architecture of Brittany, and Canon Peyron on ecclesiastical history.

Quimper is also the principal seat of the manufacture of the ware in faience that bears its name. It is a pottery with a white surface, on which flowers, fishes, and Breton peasants are figured. A good deal is in imitation of old Rouen pottery. I shrewdly suspect that most of the sham antique Marseilles ware that finds its way into the curiosity shops in Brittany, and is eagerly purchased as genuine, proceeds from some of the factories not a hundred miles from Quimper. If not genuine, it is pretty. The mark of Marseilles—a cross—is put upon it.

For many years an Englishman, who has left a memory ever green, a Mr. Goalen, had an estate near Quimper, which he planted, and there cultivated rare shrubs and trees. One night he was dining in Quimper, and he told his coachman not to trouble to fetch him, as he would walk home. He had not got far out

of Quimper when he saw a wolf trotting along the side of the road with its red eyes fixed on him. He had neither stick nor any weapon with him. He knew, however, that the brute would not venture to attack him unless a pack were near. When he reached his own gate the wolf leaped the low wall at the side and kept a few paces off till the light from his door flashed out on the drive. He had lambs carried off by wolves from the lawn before his house. In the Black Mountains and on the Landes wolves are still numerous. They are mainly dangerous in May, when they have their young. A peasant told me that he was in like manner attended by a wolf as he traversed a forest. He kept it at a distance by striking matches at intervals; he was in an agony of fear lest his box should not last till he reached the village, which happily it did.

Quimper is the key to the Bigauden country that lies to the west. The strange, Tartar-looking Bigauds occupy the whole district that ends in the Raz de Sein to the west and the Pointe de Penmarch in the south. It is made accessible by branch lines to Audierne and Pont l'Abbé. The whole of this region richly deserves a study. Douarnenez, Audierne, Pont l'Abbé are the seats of the sardine trade, and fleets of little vessels are employed in the capture.

Manufactories employ many hands—female labour—in tinning the fish that are caught. In summer it is advisable that the visitor should be well supplied with chlorodyne, as the stench of the fish and the boiling oil is calculated to upset the stomach.

At Douarnenez, on June 20th, a procession is formed at the church that descends to the harbour, where the sea is solemnly blessed, as well as the boats of the sardine fleet. It is a pretty sight. From that day till December something like eight hundred vessels are engaged in the fishery, manned by four thousand men.

At Kerdreuff, in the chapel of Notre Dame de Comfort, is a wooden wheel of fortune, with bells suspended to it, that is made to turn and tingle. A box for the reception of sous is under it, and it is supposed to have a miraculous effect for the cure of various maladies. The aspirant after health deposits his offering, and then pulls a rope that makes the wheel revolve and set all the bells clanging.\* These wheels have a pedigree.

Among the Gauls the wheel was the symbol of the sun. On their helmets they wore either horns in honour of the moon, or a wheel in token that they placed themselves under the protection of the solar deity. A good many Romano-Gaulish statues remain that represent their god holding the wheel.

When Constantine the Great was marching against Magnentius, he and the whole army witnessed a remarkable mock-sun. He at once conceived the idea of making political capital out of this phenomenon. He ordered representations of it to be made and placed on the banners of the legions, with one little addition—he prolonged the vertical ray and gave it a twist above the circle. By this means he converted

\* Another such wheel, but fallen and broken, is at S. Nicolas, near Le Faouet.

it into an "undenominational" symbol. He pretended that he had read in the heavens above the mock-sun the words, "In this sign conquer." The Gaulish pagan soldiers enthusiastically followed the banner of their sun-god, whereas the Christians held it to be the monogram of Christ. To Constantine himself it was a stroke of political charlatanry.

The wheel is found in many Gaulish tombs, a symbol of regeneration, and in the early churches of Gaul it was largely employed, and given a new signification as the sign of the Sun of Righteousness. As such it was carried on through the Middle Ages, and formed a special feature in the great cathedral wheel windows.

Cleder-Cap-Sizun has its Pardon of S. They on the first Sunday in July. This presents a good opportunity for seeing the peasants in their gala costumes. The Bigaudens have very quaint dresses. The men wear long waistcoats embroidered all down the front, and one or often two short jackets of dark cloth that do not reach to the waist. The women wear their skirts in tiers of three or four, one shorter than the other, trimmed with bands of velvet at the bottom of each, and edged with yellow silk stitching. The bodice is richly embroidered with yellow silk from the neck downwards, and the turned-back sleeves from the elbow are also worked. The under sleeve to the waist is sometimes white, but also sometimes of the same material and colour as the rest. They wear bright blue or pink aprons, with brilliant flowing streamers. The cap is of black velvet, close-fitting, and the hair is drawn up at the

back over it, and hidden under a little lace cap that lies on the top. The velvet cap is richly worked in coloured silks and has sequins on each side, and a bunch of long, broad, bright-coloured ribbons at one side. The effect is very gay.

At the Pardon des Carmes at Pont l'Abbé may be seen a few women dressed in yellow and red skirts.

The dresses worn at a wedding are still gayer, for silver lace is substituted for the velvet.

The tiers of skirts are intended to indicate the fortune of the woman, each skirt representing a thousand francs.

The children wear pretty little caps of velvet covered with silver and coloured silk stitching and with sequins.

The Quimper district—not Bigauden—is distinguished by its costume. The men wear a coat of a pretty pale blue colour. From Daoulas to Douarnenez, along the coast to Plougastel, Saint Germain, and east to S. Ivy, over the Montagnes Noires to Pleyben, all the men wear the blue coat or *chuppen* as it is called. The old men wear for best brown homespun bragoubras or wide breeches, but these are rarely seen on the young.

The extreme western promontory divides to give place to a tarn, and beyond that is the gloomy Baie des Trépassés. The lake is supposed to occupy the site of the city of Is, and goes by the name of the Etang de Laoual.

At Is King Grallo held his court, which was not a little disorderly because of the bad conduct of his daughter Ahes. Grallo himself was favourably in-



clined to the missionaries who came over in numbers from Britain and Ireland, but Ahes flouted them and turned them into ridicule. She was very beautiful and eminently vicious; and as the general run of the people follow what is bad, the state of the city of Is became rank with evil.

Now, one night S. Winwaloe was sleeping in his cell at Landevennec, which Grallo had made over to him, when an angel stood at his side and roused him.

"Take horse!" said the heavenly messenger, "and speed to Is. The vengeance of the Lord will overtake this accursed city, and the accursed woman therein. But, forasmuch as the king has in him something of the fear of God, it is given thee to deliver him."

Then Winwaloe mounted his swiftest steed, and galloped past Locronan, and at Ploaré he turned his horse's head and sped westward. He arrived at midnight at Is, and all the city was involved in revelry and debauch.

Winwaloe stood before Grallo and gave him the message: "God will deliver thee, and thee only. Therefore mount thy horse and fly with me. Hark! I hear the roar of the advancing sea."

And above the shouting and the singing of the drunken men and women in Is could be heard the surging of a mighty roar.

Then Grallo saddled and bridled his horse; but he had a father's heart, and he yearned to save his daughter. So he sought her, and told her what was coming upon the town. She mocked, but as she

mocked there came a boom of a mighty billow that had overleaped the bar of sand and had plunged into the streets of Is. At once all was confusion. In the place of song came cries, and for laughter shrieks. Then Grallo put his arm about Ahes and lifted her upon his horse, mounted, and turned to fly. Again a thunderous roar, and a second wave had plunged into the town.

"It is not given thee to deliver thy daughter," said Winwaloe.

"I will not escape without her," answered Grallo.

And now the saint and the king spurred inland, and as they rode the roar of the sea waxed louder; the lights of Is went out, and the cries of the dying were carried along with the spray upon the wind.

The horses raced; they knew that their lives depended on their outstripping the ocean. But the tide was swift, and the water swirled about the feet of the galloping steeds.

"Cast her off!" shouted Winwaloe; "it is not given thee to deliver her."

"I will not cast her off," replied the king. And still the water gained on them.

Then Winwaloe laid his staff on the arms of the clinging girl, and they were paralysed. She let go, fell from the horse, and Grallo and Winwaloe tore forward and gained high ground but just in time to save themselves, but Ahes was swallowed up in the sea.

Such is the legend. There is not a word about it in the *Life of S. Winwaloe*. Now, is there any foundation of truth in the story?

In the first place it is almost certain that in the early part of the sixth century, between 500 and 550, a subsidence did take place along the west coast of Wales, which is very likely to have extended as well to the primary rocks of Brittany. At that time the sea broke in upon a large tract of country, once eminently fertile, forming a hundred *trefs* or villages that are now beneath the waves of Cardigan Bay. The district had been divided between two chieftains, Seithenyn and Gwyddno, whose children, in consequence of the loss of their inheritance, were forced to embrace the religious life. About the same date we learn that Gulval, the sister of S. Paul of Leon, complained to her brother that her lands, which were on the Bay of S. Michael's Mount, were being submerged; and we are assured that where that bay now is was at one time forest, in which several religious communities had been formed. In the next place we have evidence in the Morbihan of such a subsidence, for in one of the islets of that inland sea are two cromlechs or circles of standing stones that are now under water. Moreover, in the lake which now covers the supposed city of Is substructures can be traced.

It is therefore probable that some sinking of the land did take place that has been exaggerated by tradition.

The Bay of the Dead is the place of which the story is told by an old Byzantine writer that at night the boatmen are summoned by a mysterious voice to ship over the souls to the Ile-de-Sein, as has been already related. And that isle is the holy place

where lived a college of weird women, who were able by their incantations to raise and lay storms.

The Pointe du Raz is ever surrounded by a boiling sea. The rocks there are bold, but not for a moment comparable to the Lizard or Land's End. The whole of this coast is dangerous for bathers, as the currents run strong and the rollers are so great; and none should venture unadvised to plunge into the sea even when comparatively calm.

At Primelin is a fine church, partly Flamboyant and partly Renaissance, that contains a statue of S. Tugene, anciently Eugen or Ugen; none other, in fact, than S. Eogain (Eugene), Bishop of Ardstraw in Ireland. The natives have a funny story about him. They say that he arrived there from Britain with his sister, and in an access of piety vowed to God that she should ever remain a virgin. But the young lady soon developed levity of conduct, and impatience at being forced to observe the ascetic life. Eogain could not go back from his vow, so he watched his sister day and night. If he and she went out for a walk he threw stones about or beat the bushes, and if he saw a bird fly out, then he knew no man was about. Now one day a youth saw her and fell in love with her. But as it was not possible to obtain Eugene's leave to speak to her, he had recourse to a trick. He hid himself in a furze bush, with a bird in his hand, near where the saint and his sister were wont to walk. He had not waited long before Eugene and the damsel drew nigh, and the former prepared to sit down and have his nap, but first threw stones about, whereat the youth let go the bird.

POINTE DU RAZ





Eugene had hardly dozed off before he was roused by hearing a male voice, and, looking round, saw his sister in friendly converse with a stranger. "Hah!" he exclaimed in a rage, "better have to do with a pack of mad dogs than look after one girl in whose mouth butter won't melt."

For his observance of the vow, God granted him after death to be the patron against hydrophobia.

In the vestry, in a silver shrine, is kept his key, and on the day of his pardon, the Sunday before Midsummer Day, the peasants buy many little leaden keys, manufactured for the purpose at Audierne and Pontcroix, and these are touched and blessed with the relic. Formerly those bitten by mad dogs were brought to the church and thrust into "the Saint's Prison," a chamber with mere slits for windows, on the left side of the porch, were communicated with the viaticum at the end of a stick, and then left to die in convulsions.

One story about the key is that it was brought to S. Eugene by an angel. Another is that it was the old church key. The church had been built by the English, and when they were driven out of Brittany, as they could not carry the church away with them, they contented themselves with the key.

But S. Tugen or Eugene was even with them. He raised a storm and barred their way, till they threw the key overboard, when it was washed up on the shore of Primelin.

There is in the place a dolmen, under which is a trough in which lepers lie and stretch themselves, expecting a miraculous cure.

The Bay of Audierne has good stretches of sandy beach, and in parts the blown sand has extended itself inland for a considerable distance, enveloping farms and hamlets. This is principally noticeable to the south of the bay, where the horn of Penmarch (the Horse's Head) limits the bay.



FIG. 32. MENHIR, PENMARCH

If the existence of the city of Is be problematical as matter of history, that of the city of Penmarch is not so. Here existed in full historic times an important town. Four centuries ago it rivalled Nantes in importance; now it has dwindled to a struggling community of fishermen, and of its former greatness nothing remains but six churches and



numerous ruins of habitations. Two groups of ancient houses, some fortified, are still occupied. The most important of the churches is that of S. Nonn, which is of the sixteenth century; of S. Guénolé only the massive tower and a tiny apse remain, and that of Kerity is in ruins.

An Irish visitor will look with interest at the rock called "The Monk's Leap," where according to tradition Fiacc, Bishop of Sletty, took land.

The Pardon of S. Nonn is held at Penmarch on the first Sunday in July. All this district can be explored from Pont l'Abbé, which is reached by a branch line from Quimper, and it is so unsophisticated, and so teems with megalithic monuments, as to deserve a stay in it.

The church at Pont l'Abbé has a very fine Second Pointed east window, with a first essay at Flamboyant tracery in the spandrels of the great wheel. The architect will note here a feature common in Brittany in windows of this period, the transom below the wheel. It is not a pleasant feature. It is unknown elsewhere.

Pont l'Abbé church tower has lost its spire. A great rising took place among the peasantry, called the *Révolte du Papier Timbré*, against an impost that was distasteful, but actually rather against seigneurial exactions. It took place in 1675, and the peasants of this district signalled themselves on that occasion by murdering some of the seigneurs and burning the châteaux. The revolt was put down with some severity, and a number of the peasants were hanged, and it is said that as a memorial of the royal dis-

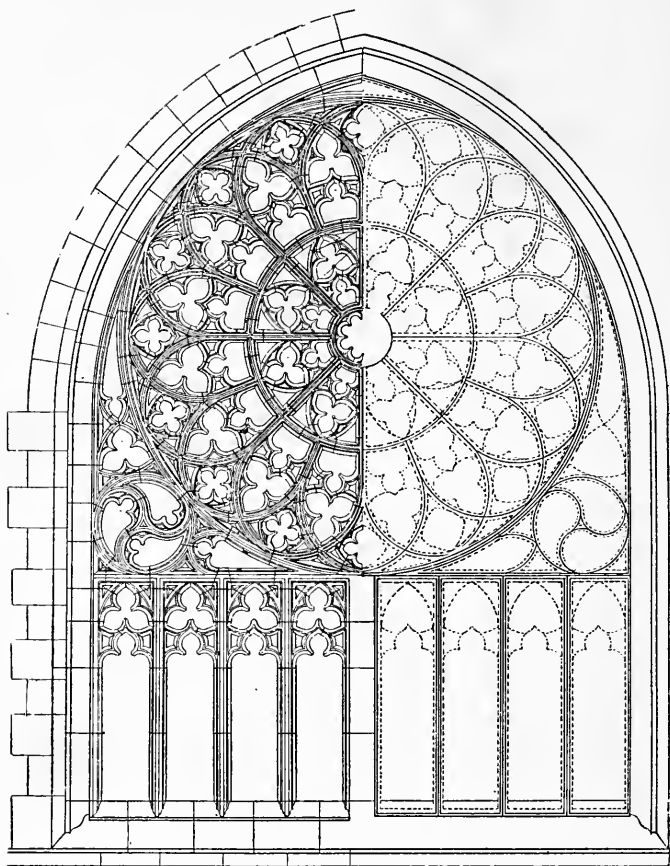


FIG. 33. EAST WINDOW, PONT L'ABBÉ  
(See note, p. 68)

pleasure the spire of the church, which was the pride of Pont l'Abbé, was pulled down. The women of the district in resentment declared that as their tower was truncated they would cut down their head-

dresses, and ever since they have worn the ugly stunted caps now seen among the Bigauden.

Loc Tudy has a fine Templar church of the eleventh century that has been fairly restored.

At Combrit the pardon is on the second Sunday in July.

This headland of Cornouaille is very bald and desolate.

"No words can give an idea of the immobility of this bare region, open to the winds from the ocean, and devoid of the shelter of a single tree. A thin soil stretches over the waste as far as the eye can see, covered with scanty grass. Nowhere else do we better realise the true character of profound melancholy that stamps Brittany."\*

A curious moral, or rather immoral, condition of affairs is said to exist in the Bigauden country, and in a belt to Auray. The men are accustomed to exchange wives, or lend their wives to neighbours. The clergy have in vain striven against this, a traditional custom. It is so contrary to the pure moral tone prevalent elsewhere as to lend colour to the supposition that this curious people belongs to a distinct primitive race that anciently practised polyandry.

\* TRO BREIZ. Fischbacher, Paris.

## CHAPTER XIV

### QUIMPERLÉ

A haunted house—The abbey—Ste. Croix—King Gunthiern—Two versions of the same story—Church of S. Michel—The Laita—Castle of Carnoet—The Devil's Rock—Le Faouet—Chapel of Ste. Barbe—Burning of Dutch William—Costumes of the neighbourhood—Concarneau—M. Alfred Guillou—Château Keryolet.

THE "Lion d'Or" at Quimperlé is a hotel that occupies the old residence of the abbots of Ste. Croix. It is a building of the period of Louis XV., with panelled rooms. Here, before the Revolution, Guillaume Davaux, fifty-second abbot and eleventh *in commendam*, resided when he visited Quimperlé. He had been tutor to the Dauphin, and was given the abbacy in 1785. He resided in Paris, and came to Quimperlé only to receive his rents, which he "ate" in Paris. It was the custom of the time for the king to give abbacies to any courtier who would enter minor orders and dress in black.

When the Revolution broke out and the estate of the abbey was valued, it was found to be worth 495,497 livres, and that there were only five monks in residence.

According to tradition at Quimperlé, Davaux was

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a worldly, well-bred man, who neglected his duties; but the historian of the abbey, M. le Men, on the other hand, describes him as "homme excellent et plein de vertu." He died in Paris in 1822.

Now it has been confidently affirmed that since his death the abbé has been repeatedly seen, or heard, in his old abbatial house. He is heard between twelve and one at night walking leisurely along the corridor on the first floor, and is occasionally seen, in his black suit with ruffles at wrist and at breast and with powdered head, standing by the window, "washing his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water."

During the Franco-German War a cousin of mine was staying at the hotel, when the house was without other visitors, and there were no "garçons" about the house. Then she heard the step along the passage about one o'clock in the morning.

Next day, as she was being driven by the inn-keeper to Le Faouet, she chanced to remark—

"I thought you were all such early people to go to bed. But you were about very late last night."

"I! Everyone in my house was asleep after nine."

"But I heard you walking past midnight."

"Ah! but *it* was he—the abbé. He is often heard at that time."

One night M. L——, the host, was in bed. A faint light entered the room through the casement, when he woke to see a profile of sharply-cut features between himself and the window, and he felt a pressure as of a hand upon his pillow. Then he heard distinctly the words: "Cherches, et tu trouves."

In deadly alarm he buried his head under the

clothes, and when he ventured to look out again nothing was visible.

After some consideration M. L—— resolved on consulting a clairvoyant. This person informed him that he must search in his cellar, and that, after digging in the earth at a certain specified spot, he would come on a flat stone, which he would raise, and under it find the church treasure. He hurried home, took spade and pick, and worked where advised, and in due course lighted on the stone.

“Mais—j'étais trop impressionné,” said he. “I covered it all up again and looked no further.”

That is not a probable story. Either he found something and did not desire that this should be known, or he found nothing and feared being laughed at for his pains. Since then the ghost has not walked.

The abbey of Quimperlé was in the Middle Ages well endowed, and possessed Belle Ile. This was coveted by the monks of Redon, who sent an expedition to the island and occupied it, and stubbornly refused to surrender it. The monks of Quimperlé appealed to the Pope, but they of Redon resisted admonitions and orders, and it was only when formally excommunicated that they gave up their hold on the island.

The church of Ste. Croix was attached to the abbey; it is now the parish church of the town on the left bank of the river Isole. It is one of those circular churches built to resemble the Holy Sepulchre, that are usually connected with commanderies of the Templars. It was rebuilt in 1083;





BRETON WASHERWOMEN, PONTAVEN



the chronicle of the monastery, however, speaks of only a restoration, and of late years it has been entirely reconstructed, but on the old lines. It consists of a central circular space surrounded by an ambulatory, and with porch and three chapels built out of it at the cardinal points, so as to give it a cruciform appearance. The central cupola is supported on four piers, and the space beneath this is raised several steps above the level of the ambulatory. Beneath it is the crypt, that has not been meddled with, and contains the tomb of S. Gurloes, first abbot of Quimperlé, who died in 1057. The Bretons call him S. Urlou, and invoke him against the gout. Against the west doorway, on the inside, is a fine reredos of carved stone, with figures of the evangelists, of 1541, that has been wantonly injured to fit it for a place for which it was not intended and is quite unsuitable.

The church owes its origin to a fugitive British king, called by the Bretons Gunthiern or Gurthiern, which is the same as Vortigern, but of course this is not the infamous prince who invoked the aid of the Saxons against the Picts and Scots. It is impossible to identify him with any other prince except Gwynllyw, the king of what is now Monmouthshire, who was the father of S. Cadoc, and who at Newport in Monmouthshire is now called S. Woollas. As Gwynllyw became a saint, and as his son Cadoc became a man of great importance in Brittany, it is probable that the two are identical, although the names by which known in Wales and in Brittany are so different.

There is an element of considerable interest in his history, of which we possess two versions proceeding from Wales and one that comes from Brittany. One of these is frank and obviously truthful. The king was a wild and lawless prince, with a set of ruffians about him. Hearing that the King of Breckon had a comely daughter called Gladys, Gwynllyw set off at the head of his rowdies, surrounded the country house where she was visiting, and carried her off, without asking leave of her father or considering her wishes. She settled into contented married life with him, and bore him a son, whom they called Cadoc.

The biographer tells us that it was the custom of the king to supply his larder by pillage. He sent his ruffians through the land, taking from the people whatever he wanted.

Now it chanced that a certain Irish monk, named Tathan, settled in the neighbourhood. Gunthiern sent for him to his castle, and arranged with his men to have some fun out of the old fellow. So they brought in a tub and filled it with scalding water, laid rushes across, and then threw a cloth over it all. When Tathan entered Gunthiern waved in the direction of this extemporised seat, and requested Tathan to occupy it. But the monk had Irish shrewdness, and seeing by the expression of the men's faces that some trick was being played on him, he cautiously seated himself on the extreme edge of the tub, and spoiled thereby their little game.

He then read Gunthiern (Gwynllyw) such a homily on bad manners, lack of hospitality, and undisciplined

life, that the king was ashamed of himself, became friendly, and finally confided to him his son Cadoc to be educated.

As age came on, Gwynllyw and his wife Gladys began to think it was time for them to prepare for another world ; so they built a chapel of poles and wattle, and daubed it with mud from the Usk, where now stands S. Woollas' Church, Newport. Their *caer* or castle was hard by, and the railway tunnel of the line to Cardiff runs under it. Every night the aged couple went to the chapel and there prayed, and every morning before dawn they descended to the river and bathed together.

In the meantime Cadoc had become an abbot, and had founded Llancarvan. Cadoc visited his father, and was well pleased to see how exemplary his life was. There still, he observed, was room for amendment. This bathing together of the old couple hardly comported with his ideas of decency, and he urged them to part company. They reluctantly agreed, and Cadoc placed his mother near a copious spring in what is now Tredegar Park. There the old lady spent the rest of her days in prayer and solitary tubbing, and was buried hard by in a mound, where she still rests awaiting the transfer of her skeleton to some anthropological museum.

As to Gunthiern, worried by the incursions of the Saxons and vexed by his conscience, which reproached him among other things for the murder of his nephew, and urged thereto by the persuasive voice of Cadoc, he resolved on quitting Gwent. He

went first to Cornwall, and remained near the Tamar till his son was well established in Armorica, when he migrated thither. Cadoc had settled near Belz, and old Gunthiern placed his cell at Quimperlé, where now stands the church of Ste. Croix. In Lent he was wont to retire to the Isle of Groix, where he spent the season in commune with his own soul and with God.

But the remarkable feature in the history is this. Some monk in the eleventh century set to work to rewrite his life, and he was greatly scandalised at the picture of the wild disorders of the king's youth, as given in the documents he worked on. So he deliberately altered the facts "for edification," and represented the king as a pious and just prince, ruling his subjects in the most humane manner; and then he tells how that, having heard of the religious and modest life of Gladys, he sent an embassy to her parents to ask her hand of them; and how that the King of Breckon, hearing a good report of the King of Gwent, sent his daughter to him, and the marriage was concluded in the most respectable manner.

Happily we have both versions of the story, and can thus see how facts were manipulated by hagiographers in the Middle Ages to suit their somewhat narrow religious ideas.

In addition to these narratives, we have also the life written by a monk of Quimperlé, who knew very little indeed of the early history of the saint in Wales, and who gives us the conclusion of the story which was unknown to the Welsh biographers.

Probably no man has had more tricks played with his name. Gwynllyw was quite unpronounceable by the English settlers at Newport, in Monmouthshire, so they changed it to Woollas, and Latinised it as Olavus. As S. Olave he figures at Poughill, in Cornwall, where he tarried for a few years. On reaching Brittany he became Gurthiern, or Gunthiern, and popularly Gouziere, or Goujarne.

The Book of Charters of the Abbey of Quimperlé, together with the Life of Gurthiern and that of S. Ninnoch, was carried away by one of the last monks, when the religious were expelled from the abbey at the Revolution. A Doctor Guillon received it in payment for his medical services. On the death of the doctor it passed to his son, who sold it to Mr. Stapleton, who was travelling in Lower Brittany, and he by his will left it, together with all his library at Carlton Towers, in Yorkshire, as an heirloom. Only by chance did M. Delisle, Librarian of the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, hear of it, and he commissioned M. Léon Maitre to endeavour to obtain a copy. Meanwhile Mr. Stapleton was dead, and his library had passed to Lord Beaumont, then very young, and who was not easily found, as he was on his travels. M. Maitre went to London and obtained letters from the Marquis de la Ferronnays, French Ambassador, to Lady Beaumont, at Carlton Towers, and M. Maitre at once went thither. The librarian who had catalogued the books knew nothing of the cartulary; nevertheless days were spent in the search, all to no end, when, just as M. Maitre was leaving, Lady Beaumont opened a drawer full of old news-

papers and rubbish of all sorts, and pulled forth a shabby little volume—and lo! it was the very book sought for. Copies were made, and the cartulary has been published.

At Quimperlé the Ellé and the Isole unite, and the combined stream below the town bears the name of Laïta.

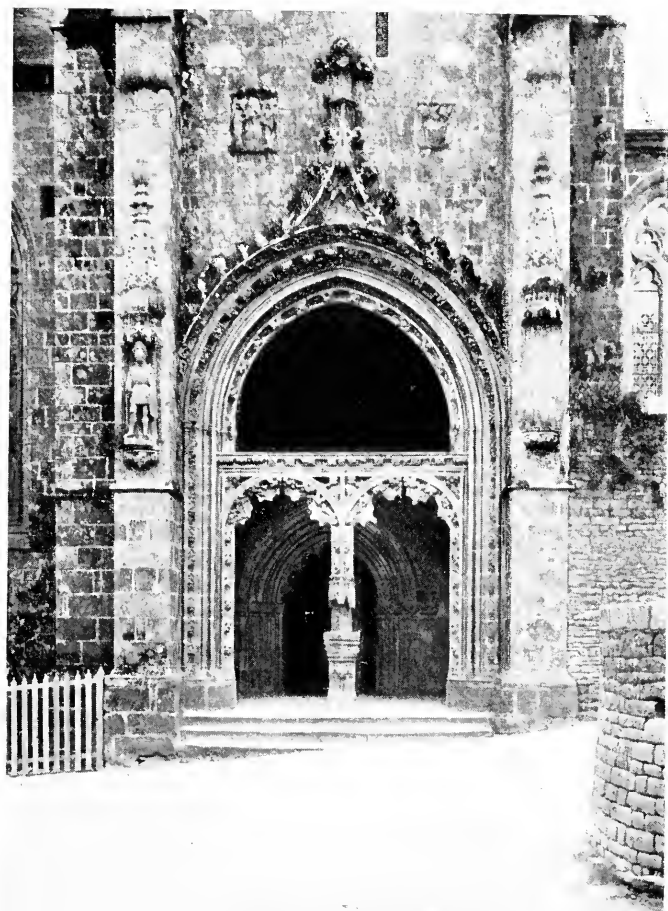
From the bridge over the Ellé a fine view is obtained of the upper town, on the right bank, that climbs the steep hillside, some of the streets being a flight of steps, and dominated by the noble tower of S. Michael. This church has a Second Pointed nave without a west end front, which is built against. Choir and narrow choir aisles and north transept and tower are Flamboyant.

The east end is square, with a poor window, when Flamboyant was stiffening to death. As the east end is above the rapid descent of the ground to the river, it has to be sustained by bold buttresses, and these are pierced with arches for roadways. The north porch is a superb piece of Third Pointed work.

Quimperlé is, in my opinion, the most picturesque town in Brittany. Unhappily it has lost its castle and walls, which were pulled down in 1680 by the inhabitants.

The river Laïta may be descended by boat to Pouldu; the scenery is pleasing. The roadway to Pouldu leads through the forest of Carnoet. On the way the chapel of Lothea is passed, to which pilgrimage is made on Whitsun Monday, when vast quantities of birds are on sale. In the forest of Carnoet are the remains of the castle of Conmore,





PORCH, S. MICHEL, QUIMPERLÉ. END OF XVTH CENT.



which, however, was rebuilt in the fifteenth century. Conmore is locally regarded as a Breton Bluebeard, but history knows of his having had three wives only. The abbey of S. Maurice is near the river. It was founded in 1170.

The chapel of Rosgrand contains a very rich but late rood-screen of oak, carved and enriched with figures arbitrarily chosen from the gospel story and from heathen mythology. It contains as well a thirteenth-century statue of Yhuel, the grandson of Gildas, who in his youth lived an eremitical life near here, but ended his days in Wales, as Bishop of Llandaff, and according to Welsh tradition he was one of those who met Augustine, and refused to recognise his jurisdiction. The statue represents him as a youth with flowing hair. The Bretons knew nothing of his after life.

At Locunolé are some pretty sites, the valley of the Ellé with its cascades, the castle of Boblaye, and finally the Devil's Rock. This is a mass that has in it a number of perforations made by Satan when polishing and sharpening his claws. According to legend a peasant saw him there and pulled his tail, whereupon, with a whisk, Satan sent him flying into the air and precipitated him into the valley below, where all his bones were broken.

The good folk of Quimperlé call this part of the country the Breton Switzerland, forgetting that in Switzerland there is no sea and in Brittany are no mountains.

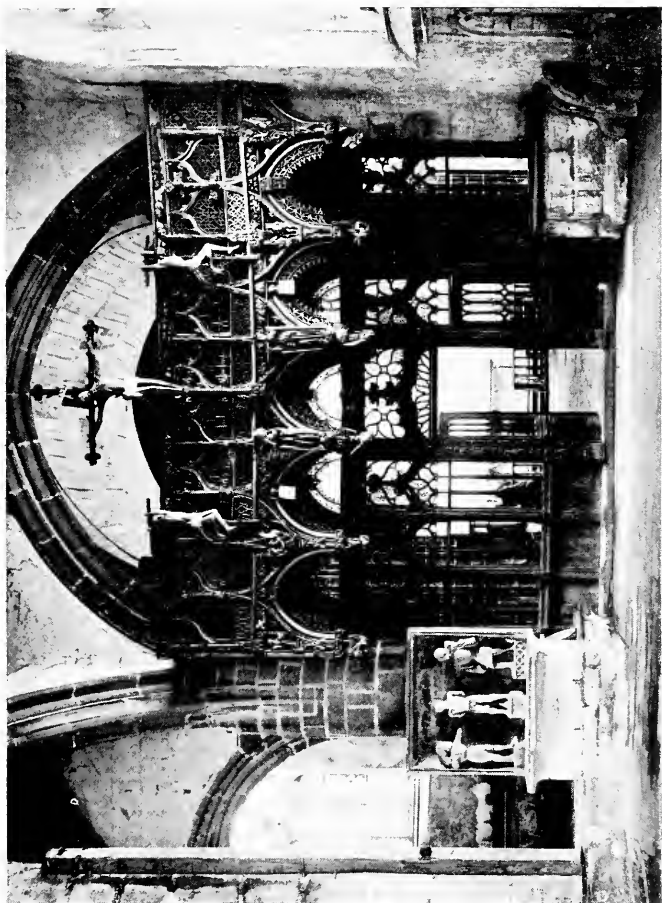
From Quimperlé to Le Faouët is 21 kilometres, and the visit thither should on no account be omitted.

Before reaching Le Faouët, which takes its name from the beech trees which once abounded there, the chapel of S. Fiacre is visited, standing a little off the road. It possesses quite first-class foliage-carving of the Flamboyant period, of striking boldness, and a rood-screen of 1480, that has lost most of its interest by injudicious "restoration." The chapel was full of superb old glass, now broken and blown in, and hanging in scraps.

Le Faouët has a picturesque market hall under one vast roof. From it Ste. Barbe is visited, a chapel built on a crag above a valley clothed in gorse, and strewn with granite blocks, very much like one on Dartmoor. The visitor first passes a bell structure on the rock head, then traverses a bridge to the little chapel of S. Michael on a spire of rock. Clamps let into the rock enabled pilgrims to crawl round the chapel, hanging over the precipice, but an accident having occurred a few years ago, through one of the handles coming out, the police have forbidden any further such attempts.

At a lower level is the chapel of Ste. Barbe, of the end of the fifteenth century, with rich old stained glass, and a small rood-loft or gallery with some remains of good carving on it.

The Pardon of Ste. Barbe is on the last Sunday in June. When this coincides with the Sunday after the Fête Dieu (first Sunday after Trinity), the little altars are erected among the pines and rocks, and the procession goes to Ste. Barbe, resting at the stations on the way, and nothing more picturesque can well be conceived.



ROOD-SCREEN, S. FIACRE. 1480



A chapel of S. Nicolas in Prisiac, about four miles from Le Faouët, contains a noble Renaissance rood-screen, with its original paintings quite untouched, and a "wheel of fortune," now fallen and broken.

There is a special interest to an Englishman in this chapel. The people were celebrating their pardon in 1690, when the news reached them of the battle of the Boyne, with the false report of the death of William of Orange and the victory of James. At once a figure of William, decked out with yellow favours, was made and burnt in a bonfire. Although it was learned later that the news was false, yet thenceforth, every year, Dutch William was burnt till 1828, when this feature of the pardon was abolished. The folk called their figure Pistolance (Prince d'Orange).

From S. Ivy to Quimperlé the costumes are dark, but the women wear very becoming caps and collars, which give them a characteristic appearance quite apart from the other Finistère costumes. The cap is of lace, and is elegantly planted on the head. It differs in each district a little in its shape, and in the loops and streamers. The cap is over a coloured ribbon. In several places the women's skirts and bodices are richly embroidered with gold and silver floral designs. At Scaer the men wear black coats with orange and red stitching, but otherwise in all the Quimperlé district the men wear black coats trimmed with black velvet. At Elliant, a little village north of Rosporden, the costume is very rich, as both men and women apply a great deal of embroidery to their costumes, and the men wear

white worked collars, but not elegant in shape—they reach nearly to their ears. The women's bodices are cut in a quaint fashion, and are double-breasted, with rich work down each side, and with large quilted collars lace-edged, and pretty caps after the style of the Quimperlé cap. It is one of the finest costumes in all Brittany; and the little children are dressed in exactly the same style as their parents. The similarity does not end there: the little minds, the habits of life as well as of body, beliefs, superstitions, prejudices, grow with them; and so generations follow, thinking, feeling, believing, dressing alike.

At Concarneau, a great fishing place, lives M. Alfred Guillou, a painter of Breton seaside folk, like our English Hook. His pictures are full of delicacy and charm, and seem to smell of the sea. He is a native of Concarneau, and is a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. No visitor should leave Concarneau without a visit to his studio.

Near Concarneau is the castle of Keryolet, given by the Countess de Chauveau-Narischkin to the department in 1890. It has been converted into a museum, and contains fine old furniture and a collection of Breton costumes.





WOMAN OF DOUARNENEZ



## CHAPTER XV

### AURAY

Auray—Hennebon—Its two sieges—The battle of Auray—Death of Charles de Blois—Ste. Anne d'Auray—Origin of the pilgrimage—Carnac—The church of S. Cornély—The pilgrimage—Who was S. Cornély?—The alignments—Rows of Le Menec—Of Kermario—Of Kerlescant—Period when raised—Musée Miln—Quiberon—Massacre of 1795—Chartreuse of Auray—Lagoon of Etel—S. Cadoc.

ALTHOUGH this chapter is headed Auray, I do not propose suggesting that it should be made headquarters for a series of visits. The town is a mile from the station, and is not of remarkable interest in itself; and I head the chapter as I do rather because Auray is *chef lieu d'arrondissement*, and Carnac, about which I shall principally write, is only a village.

Yet Auray has its interest. It was the scene of the decisive battle of 1364; but before speaking of that it will be well to visit the interesting town of Hennebon, and consider its sieges in 1342.

Hennebon is on a hill bathed by the Blavet, and in addition to the modern town it possesses the *ville-clos*, the old fortified Hennebon, within its walls, and guarded by its towers. It is in itself a town of the Middle Ages, and possesses a number of old houses of various dates.

The church of Nôtre Dame de Paradis is Flamboyant and good of the style ; it was built between 1513 and 1530, and has a fine spire. When Flamboyant is good it is very good, and when bad it is execrable.

The story of the first siege of Hennebon has been often and well told, and I will here do no more than give an outline of it.

In 1342 Jeanne de Montfort held the place against Charles de Blois. In full armour and mounted on a charger, she rode through the streets encouraging the soldiers and the citizens to maintain a gallant defence. The cause of Montfort was that of Brittany against the encroachments of France, which thrust on Charles de Blois. The example of Jeanne stimulated all, and the women even lent their assistance.

At intervals Jeanne essayed sorties. One day she got through the besiegers' lines and was unable to return. Great was the alarm felt. But after the lapse of a few days the inhabitants saw her reappear. She had taken refuge in a neighbouring castle, had collected additional troops, and with them broke through the intervening lines, and in so doing burnt the camp of Charles and released his prisoners.

But the siege was long protracted, and provisions failed. The citizens insisted that they could hold out no longer, and desired that a surrender should be negotiated. Jeanne entreated, and with difficulty gained a delay of three days. The first and second passed without the arrival of assistance ; on the last day the principal citizens knocked at her door, and on being admitted, protested that they could endure no further.

Then from the hostile camp arrived the Bishop of Léon, who announced that unless the gates were forthwith opened Charles de Blois would put to the sword everyone in the town regardless of age and sex, whether garrison or citizens. Again, and for the last time, the Countess mounted the highest tower, and gazed seaward. There she saw the gleam of white sails on the horizon, and knew that the expected succour was at hand. And, indeed, it was an English fleet containing six thousand archers under the command of Walter de Manny.

Defiance to the uttermost was now cast back in the teeth of the barbarous Charles, who, on hearing of the approach of the fleet, raised the siege and sneaked away.

The second siege took place later in the same year. Charles of Blois sat down before the town with a large army, and furnished with many engines of war, but every assault failed. Then Luis of Spain, his dark blood boiling with rage, went to Charles and said, "Monseigneur, grant my request. There are two of the English party prisoners in your castle of Le Faouët, Jean le Boteller and Hubert de Fresney. Let me have their blood. If you refuse I withdraw."

Such a request staggered Charles. To butcher prisoners of war in cold blood was against the usages of warfare in Christian lands. Charles feebly sent for the prisoners. Luis insisted on his demand being complied with. Charles turned his sheep's face from Luis to the captives in doubt and difficulty. Then all the nobles and knights present cried

out against such an infamous proceeding as surrendering these men to death.

"I insist on having their heads," retorted Luis. "I will have them decapitated when I have done my dinner." And Charles basely submitted.

Tidings of what was meditated reached the garrison of Hennebon, and whilst the French were dining Amaury de Clisson, who was in command of the town, sallied forth with three hundred men, rushed upon the camp, overthrew the tents, and cut down all who opposed them.

Whilst thus engaged, Manny with a band of resolute fellows, issuing from a postern, made direct for the tent of Charles de Blois, liberated the captives, and brought them in triumph into the beleaguered town.

Shortly after Charles raised the siege, and retreated to Carhaix.

The battle of Auray took place on Michaelmas Day, 1364.

The young Jean de Montfort was besieging Auray, when he was joined by Sir John Chandos with a hundred knights and a body of archers. The army was for the most part made up of adventurers, some English, many Gascons and men of Navarre, lawless fellows who formed themselves into companies under distinguished chiefs, sold their services to the highest bidder, and subsisted indiscriminately on friend and foe. The most notable Englishmen engaged were, after Chandos, Hugh of Calverley and Robert Knollys. Hugh de Gournay from Guienne was there with his freebooters. Under Montfort were

his loyal Bretons. In all, the army was composed of not above two thousand men and half as many archers.

The host of Charles of Blois was almost double in number, and in it were some of the highest nobles of France, the Bretons of high position who had espoused the side of Blois, and Bertrand du Guesclin, a host in himself.

At sight of the disparity in numbers Montfort, who was between the army of Blois and the garrison of the town, deemed it expedient to treat for peace.

Charles was disposed to come to terms; he was in a dire fright over a dream that had troubled him in the night. He had seen an eagle attacked by a falcon from the sea, which pecked the feathers out of the king of the birds and grievously wounded him. Charles—this miserable barn-door fowl—supposed that the eagle must signify himself.

But his wife would not hear of terms: she stormed and scouted the notion; and Charles, more afraid of his wife than of his dreams, refused terms.

The battle raged from under the walls of Auray to the hamlet of Ste. Anne. The army of Montfort was on the higher ground, and reaped an advantage thereby. Charles divided his host into three bodies—or “battles,” to employ the expression then in use—and he had likewise a rearguard.

The first “battle” consisted of Bretons commanded by Du Guesclin; the second, composed of French, was under the orders of the Count of Auxerre and Joigny. The third, also made up of Bretons, was under Charles himself.

Montfort, acting on the advice of Chandos, also formed his army into three bodies and a rearguard. Robert Knollys commanded the first, Olivier de Clisson the second, the third was under De Montfort; Calverley was set over the reserve.

At the last moment, just as the two armies were about to engage, Charles sent word that he had changed his mind and would listen to terms; but Montfort replied haughtily, "It is now too late. I will be Duke of Brittany, or die on the field."

As at Poitiers, so at Auray, the knights descended from their horses, so as not, if overthrown, to lie prostrate and helpless, till assisted to their feet by their squires.

A prophecy had been given circulation that he who wore the ermine of Brittany would fall.

One of the knights of Montfort assumed the coat of his master, and Charles of Blois made for him and dealt him such a blow with his axe that the knight fell to the ground. Charles, believing that he had killed his rival, shouted, "*Bretagne! or est mort celui de Montfort, par qui j'ai été ainsi grévé.*"

The news would have produced consternation in the ranks of the Anglo-Bretons had not the young Jean raised his visor and shown his ermine. Then he hurled himself against the "battle" of Charles of Blois.

The fight now became general, and, like one of the old conflicts under the walls of Troy, a series of duels between heroes. Charles had committed the fatal blunder of using up his rearguard in the engagement, instead of reserving it fresh and vigorous



for the last moment. A slight success was the result, but it cost Charles the day. The rearguard became entangled with the troops of Du Guesclin, and threw them into disorder; whereupon Calverley with his reserve at the right moment came down on the French, who were breathless and exhausted, and the superiority in numbers of the army of Blois only served to make the confusion the greater.

The defeat resolved itself into a rout. Before the battle had begun word had been passed in each camp that the leader on the other side was not to be taken alive. Charles fought desperately, but fell, crying out with his last breath that he was not to blame, it was his wife's doing that he engaged in the battle.

The day ended in butchery. Du Guesclin was taken prisoner. A thousand on the side of Charles lost their lives, among them the flower of the Breton nobility, and 1,529 prisoners were taken.

Ste. Anne d'Auray is not worth a visit except on the occasion of a pardon. The story of this most frequented shrine deserves relating in a few words.

Where the pilgrimage church now stands was formerly a place called Keranna, that is to say, the *Caer* or *Camp* of Anna. This Anna was the Mother of the Gods among the Celts, but probably adopted by them from the dolmen-builders they had subjugated. She was apparently the great Earthmother who presided over births, but who also received the dead. And the Breton name *Ankou* for Death impersonified is perhaps a reminiscence of this *Ane* or *Anna*.

On March 7th, 1625, a peasant dug up a statue on the spot, probably one of those *Deæ Matres* of which so many have been found in the Roman villa near Carnac. He at once jumped to the conclusion that it represented the Mother of the Blessed Virgin, who was popularly supposed to be called Anne. For this name there is no authority worth a rush. It is that given her in an apocryphal gospel which is historically worthless.

The Carmelites heard of it, and determined on exploiting this discovery. They organised a cult of the image in 1627, and it "took on." The image was destroyed in 1790, but a scrap of it is supposed to have been preserved, and is included in the pedestal of a new image.

And now S. Anne is regarded as the special patronness of Brittany. It is a curious story, and shows how old beliefs hang on and reassert themselves in changed forms.\*

The church is modern, pretentious, and bad.

There is a large basin that is supplied by the fountain of S. Anne, the water of which is held to be good for bad eyes. The principal pardons are on S. Anne's Day, July 26th, and during Whitsun Week. An imitation of the Santa Scala has been erected and indulged with nine years for every step which the penitents ascend on their knees.

A branch line runs from Auray to Quiberon, and at Plouharnel is the station for Carnac.

The whole of this portion of the coast seems to

\* The name of S. Anne is found in no ancient calendar. The cult began in the fifteenth century.

have served as a necropolis for the ancient Veneti. It is crowded with monuments of the dead. A few days may well be spent at Carnac in studying them.

The parish church of Carnac was rebuilt in 1639, and has a well-proportioned western tower and spire, with spirelets at the angles, all of granite. The granite blocks of which the spire has been constructed have been cut to overlap as they retreat, so as to cast the rain off, and not suffer it to penetrate the joints. Above the western door is a figure of the patron, S. Cornelius, life-size, with a couched ox on each side of him.

On the north flank is an extravagant baroque porch, with a sort of baldachin of open granite-work above. It is barbarous and fantastic. Within, the four easternmost windows of the body of the church are excellent modern work in stained glass—pictures from the life of S. Cornelius, but the style suits a church of so late a date and windows without tracery.

The fountain of S. Cornély, as the saint is locally called, is at some little distance to the west of the church.

The Pardon of S. Cornély takes place on the 13th September, and is a curious sight.

All the farmers for miles around make a point of bringing their cattle in pilgrimage to the saint, who is the patron of horned beasts. They drive them round the church; then the owners kneel before the figure over the west door, say a prayer, after which they drive their beasts to the holy well, where they sprinkle their heads with the water.

The procession of pilgrims is also curious. They

enter the church, kneel before the relics of the saint, make the round of the church, and on reaching the well are assailed by beggars and children holding vessels that contain the water from the spring. The pilgrim selects one of these, dips his right hand in it, washes his face, and raises his arms to heaven so as to allow the water to trickle over him. It is customary for such farmers as can afford it to give a beast to S. Cornély. After High Mass these cattle are ranged about the principal porch; the clergy come forth in procession and bless the oblations, which are then led away to be sold by auction for the good of the church. On the day of the pardon the principal procession takes place in the afternoon. The relics are carried on a bier by clergy, the crosses and banners by lusty young pilgrims. The task is not easy, as some of the banners are heavy, and a few years ago a young man of Ploemel fell dead of exhaustion under the organ-loft bearing his great banner. Cords of hemp are sold to the pilgrims, and these are worn by them slung over one shoulder and knotted on the opposite thigh, or else twisted round their hats.

Now what is the origin of this curious worship of S. Cornelius and his association with horned beasts? Some years ago the late Mr. James Miln excavated a Roman villa at Bossenno in the parish, and besides finding a number of votive images of Venus and the Deæ Matres, discovered one of an ox. This seems to show that the oblation of horned beasts goes back to pagan times.

Precisely the same thing that takes place at

Carnac now took place till the beginning of the last century at Clynnog, in Wales, but there the cattle were offered to S. Beuno. This saint and S. Cornély have apparently supplanted a pagan deity, and the same has taken place at S. Herbot and elsewhere; the oblation continues, but is now made to a saint.

S. Cornély was perhaps arbitrarily chosen because the name was associated with a horn (*cornu*). Cornelius was Bishop of Rome in 252, and a martyr. But this is not the story told of him at Carnac. There he is held to have been a local saint, who in travelling laded his portmanteau and other goods on a couple of oxen, and drove them before him. He was pursued by an army of pagans; he fled before them till he reached the coast, and there, unable to get further, turned and cursed the host that pursued him, and every soldier was thereupon transformed into stone. By this means the peasants account for the vast ranges of upright stones that form the alignments of Carnac.

There was a horned deity worshipped by the Gauls, and it is possible that the cult of this god may have passed on to Cornelius at Carnac and elsewhere to S. Nicodemus and S. Herbot.

That there was a local British or Irish missionary of the name of Cornelius is possible enough. If so, then the relics in the church may be his; as those of the martyr-Pope it goes without saying that they are spurious.

Now let us look at some of the marvellous remains of a prehistoric race that abound in these parts.

There are something like fifty dolmens or *allées*

*couvertes* within an easy walk, and there are numerous menhirs independent of those which form stone-rows.\* Of alignments there are about ten groups, but we will concern ourselves with three only.

The first step to be taken by the visitor is to ascend the Mont S. Michel, and obtain a general view of the great lines of Le Menec and Kermario.

This mount is a huge cairn erected on the summit of rising ground. It is oblong in shape, and rises about 60 feet. On the summit is a chapel of S. Michael. The mound was dug into in 1863, when a dolmen was discovered that contained over a hundred stone axes, a necklace, and other objects of the early Bronze Age. It is now undergoing further investigation. A second dolmen has been found buried in it, in which, along with stone implements, were two bronze buttons. The cairn is built up most carefully of stones laid in order one on the other, and over these a sheet of sea ooze and seaweed has been spread, and then above this again fresh stones have been piled. The floor was strewn thick with small pebbles from the beach before the mound was raised.

From the chapel a fine view of the sea and the inlets and the peninsula of Quiberon is obtained; and on the north the stretch of upright stones that form the alignments of Carnac. To visit these latter the following course should be pursued. Take the road to Kaer Malvezin, and in a few minutes, on a bit of rising ground on the left, is seen a dolmen on which a cross has been erected. Very

\* A little local guide with map may be had at the Musée Miln.

soon after the road traverses the lines of Le Menec. There are still standing eleven of these rows, and they run from E.N.E. to W.S.W. The total length is 3,510 feet, and there are 1,169 stones in them. The tallest menhir is 13 feet high, but the majority run from 3 to 4 feet.

It is well to turn to the left and pursue the rows to the western extremity, where is a so-called cromlech or stone-circle, but incomplete and apparently tampered with. It is now an enclosure connected with the farm of Le Menec, and in my opinion is nothing more than the engirdling ring of a tumulus that contained a dolmen which has been destroyed, the stones of which have been employed for the construction of the farmhouse. At the same time the shape of the enclosure was altered to suit the farmer's convenience, and it is now no more than a semicircle.

Having retraced our steps to the road, we cross it, and follow the avenues of upright stones till we reach and cross another road, that to Ploemel. The road has broken through the lines, which continue only a few yards to the east, and then are brought to a conclusion by blocking-stones, that is to say, slabs set at right angles to the lines.

From this point ensues a gap for about 345 yards, where are a little plantation of Austrian pines, a stone quarry, and some furzy enclosures. The lines are not, however, wholly interrupted; a few upright stones and several that are prostrate testify that there was some continuation.

We follow a new road through the plantation and

between walls till we come abruptly on a fresh cluster of stones, and these the highest we have yet seen. This is the commencement of the Kermario group. These started from several tumuli enclosing dolmens, but of such only one, an *allée couverte* pertaining to the southernmost line, remains. The relics of a second barrow can be traced, and possibly of a third, that has been mutilated to form a hedge.

The southernmost line is the most instructive, though that also has suffered. There is a good *allée couverte* running north and south, and from that start two rows of upright stones that extend about 250 yards to a pair of fine blocking-stones, planted at right angles to the rows, which run in an easterly direction from the "covered avenue." Unhappily the road and a field have invaded the land and caused the destruction of much of these rows; nevertheless, sufficient remains to show that originally the dolmen formed one end, that from which the lines started, and that they were concluded—brought to a full stop—by the tall menhirs that act as blocking-stones.

These stones, placed at right angles, seem to have escaped the observation of the local antiquaries, or perhaps they did not estimate their true significance.

Now Dartmoor is extraordinarily rich in such stone-rows, and the majority are intact, so that by them we obtain means of interpreting those of Carnac, which are imperfect. It would seem that when a great chief had been buried in a dolmen or kistvaen (stone chest), the members of the clan set up stones in a line, one for each household, leading from the place of sepulture. When the



household was small and the arms weak, only a small block was erected. A big family, with stout young men in it, prided itself in erecting one that was tall. And when all the families of the clan had shown their respect for the chief, they all combined to close the line.

But the dolmens or covered avenues were tribal ossuaries. They were not intended for single interments. When again a burial took place, then a new row was started, or if there were not room for that, a fresh set of stones was set up beyond the original blocking-stone.

These are some of the lessons taught by the Dartmoor alignments, which have been left through vast ages untouched, and are therefore priceless as affording a clue to the meaning of these mysterious monuments, such as might be sought for in vain elsewhere, and which is certainly not to be found at Carnac, where the wrecking hand of the farmer has been at work on them from Roman times.

The Kermario alignments run north-east up a hill crowned by a disused windmill that has been constructed out of the blocks, then they continue some way till walls and a wood interrupt their course. Ten rows remain, and the number of standing stones is 982. But there were certainly more rows formerly. The largest of the menhirs is prostrate; apparently it had been purposely thrown down to form a coverer to a Gallo-Roman grave that was beneath it.

What is of special interest is the fact that a Roman camp was formed in these lines, and that those who constructed the camp made use of the

stones for their wall of enclosure, breaking up some and employing others in their original position where it served their purpose. Also, an examination of the bases of many of the menhirs reveals the fact that the Roman soldiery or camp followers squatted under these great stones, lighted their fires against them, and there took their meals, for not only have ashes been discovered there, but also fragments of Roman pottery and coins. This indicates that at the period of the Roman occupation of Armorica all sense of sacredness connected with these monuments was lost, and we know how very strict was Roman opinion relative to the sanctity and inviolability of tombs.

From the easternmost end of the Kermario group occurs an interruption of about 398 yards, and then we encounter a third group, that of Kerlescant, which stretches 885 yards, but is much mutilated about the village. Thirteen lines can be traced containing 540 stones, but there are others—some 40 that lie to the north, and are supposed to form a square enclosure, but which are probably merely a fragment of other parallel lines. To the east again the alignment is supposed to describe a curve towards the north, and then recommence and run east again to the Crach estuary. Near the rows is also a ruined *allée couverte*. But unless a visitor be specially interested in prehistoric remains he will probably be content with a visit to the Le Menec and Kermario groups. The whole extent of the rows cannot be estimated as short of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

At Erdeven as well are alignments, which, though

sorely mutilated, must have been as fine as those of Carnac, and possessed stones even loftier. There also is the dolmen of Corcomo, which is the largest in the Morbihan.

The Société Polymathique of the department has done good service in the exploration of dolmens and tumuli, but it has neglected to do that which is of supreme importance—plan the entire collection of megalithic remains, and without a very carefully made plan of the lines of Carnac, their interpretation cannot be attempted in any other way than by comparison with extant remains of the same character elsewhere, and then tentatively only. Till the desired map has been made, the field is left open for every sort of conjecture relative to the significance of these monuments. If I have ventured to give my explanation, it is because of my intimate acquaintance with the unruined lines on Dartmoor, which, if not on so gigantic a scale as those of Carnac and Erdeven, are much more perfect.

As to the date of erection, that can only be determined tentatively. Certainly the most ancient dolmens belong to the Polished Stone Age, and to that of Bronze. But that the dolmens and cairns continued to be used as tribal burial-places till after the Roman invasion is probable; that they were so in pure Gallic times, in the Age of Iron, is indisputable, for pottery (black) which is Gaulish has been found in some. And this is not to be marvelled at, for the same race which had raised these monumental tombs continued under the domination of their Gaulish conquerors, and impressed on them much of their

religion and traditionary usage ; and that same race remains, but little modified, on the soil to the present day, still dominated by the same ideas.

Carnac possesses a capital museum illustrative of its antiquities, founded by Mr. James Miln. This gentleman, born in 1819, and possessed of a handsome fortune, devoted several years and much money to the exploration of the remains at Carnac, which he first visited in 1873. Then his imagination was fired by the mystery that surrounded the strange monuments there collected. He worked there from 1874 to 1880, when he returned to Scotland, and died in January, 1881. His entire collection he left to the commune of Carnac, which gladly accepted it, and undertook its custody in a suitable building.

In this museum may be seen numerous miniature stone polished axes, votive offerings made to the dead, on precisely the same principle as the paper garments and money burnt by the Chinese as oblations to their deceased ancestors.

The peninsula of Quiberon saw the disastrous disembarkation of the French *émigrés* from English transports in 1795. It was a foolishly planned and badly executed venture. Hoche with his republican troops encountered them, and shot them all down to the number of 952. The scene of the massacre was what is now called Le Champ des Martyrs, near the Chartreuse of Auray, and the bones of the unfortunate victims, which had been left in the place where they had been shot, were removed in 1814 to a vault of the Chartreuse. The chapel above their bones is of white marble and contains sculptures.

In addition to the mausoleum, a *chapelle expiatoire* was erected on the spot where these gallant men met their death; and at no great distance, on the old road to Auray, is a cross that marks the site of the battle of Auray, already described, in which Charles of Blois met his death, 1364.

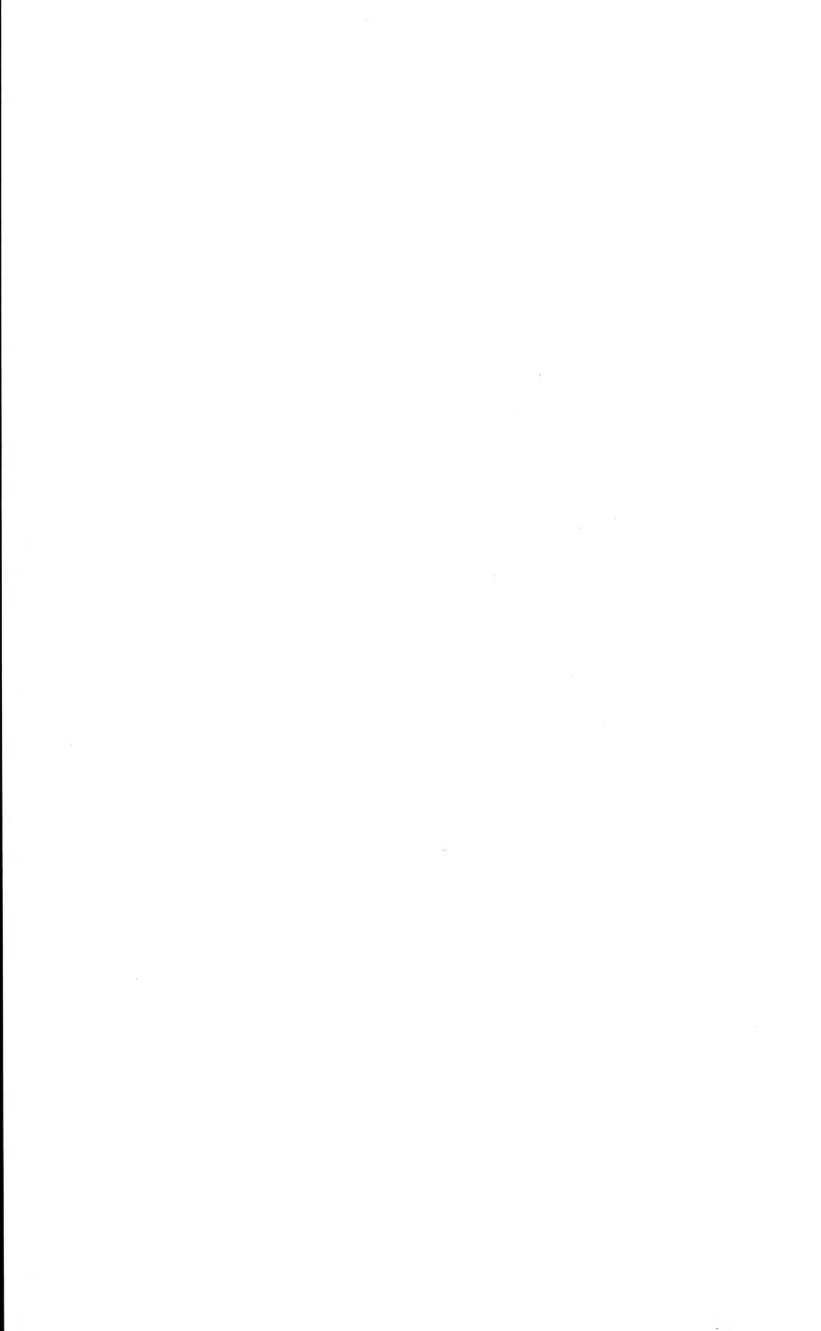
If the coast northward from Plouharnel and Erdeven be followed, through a country that is strewn with prehistoric monuments, the curious inland sea of Belz, or river of Etel, is reached. It is a creek that is almost landlocked between sandhills, and is shallow and encumbered with sandbanks. After a narrow passage of nearly four miles, the waters expand and run inland for from seven to eight miles in tortuous armlets. There are several islands and long-extended tongues of land that run into the waters. One of the former, the Isle of S. Cadoc, is connected with the mainland by a causeway, which is attributed to the saint.

S. Cadoc was the son of Gwynllyw, or Woollas, as he is now called at Newport in Monmouthshire, and his father, who was king of that part of Wales, gave him to an Irish hermit to be educated. As soon as he approached manhood, Cadoc visited Ireland to finish his studies at Lismore. After that he returned to Wales, and perfected himself under a Roman rhetorician lately arrived. The doctor had more pupils than money, and famine reigned in the school. One day Cadoc observed a white mouse come out of a hole in the wall carrying a grain of wheat in its mouth. Cadoc searched, and discovered one of those subterranean storehouses in which the Britons often

preserved their grain. This had somehow been closed up and forgotten. This was a great discovery, and it served master and scholars for many days.

Cadoc then became a pupil of S. David, and whilst with him headed a posse of Welshmen against the Saxons. He found the latter encamped at the bottom of a valley, and with no scouts out. He surrounded them with his Britons, and rolled down stones on them or pelted them. Nor did he desist till he had killed them to the last man.

Cadoc afterwards founded Llancarvan, which became a famous abbey. To furnish it with nursery institutions he visited Brittany, and established himself on precisely this islet in the lagoon of Etel which we are considering. However, he did not find it answered all his expectations, and he wandered through Armorica, making a good many subsidiary foundations, all for the definite purpose of drawing scholars together who might begin their training therein, and then be sent on to be finished off at Llancarvan. There are numerous chapels in his honour throughout Brittany. His "pardon" is on the fourth Sunday in October.





A FISHER-MAIDEN



## CHAPTER XVI

### VANNES

Capital of the Veneti—Cæsar and the Veneti—Destruction—The Frank invasion—British colonists—Gweroc—Macliau and Canao—Macliau made bishop—Canao receives Chramm—Chramm's death—Fortifications of Vannes—Cathedral—S. Vincent Ferrier—The Morbihan—Gavr-inis—Peninsula of Rhuys—Gildas—Abelard—A gentleman in quest of sunshine.

VANNES was the capital of the Veneti, a remarkable maritime people, who monopolised the trade in tin with Cornwall. They had large vessels built of oak, and with sails of hide. They conveyed the tin from Britain to Spain, where they transferred it to the Phœnician traders, and these latter distributed it about the shores of the Mediterranean. As the trade of the Mediterranean was in Phœnician hands, so was that of the northern seas in those of the Veneti.

In the year B.C. 57 the Veneti, as well as the other Gaulish peoples of Armorica, submitted to Rome, and gave hostages to Crassus, the lieutenant of Julius Cæsar.

Crassus spent the ensuing winter in what was afterwards Anjou, and as there had been a bad harvest that year he was in difficulties how to feed

his legions. He accordingly sent to the Veneti and other Armorican tribes to furnish him with what he required. The Veneti did not feel disposed to do this ; their harvest had been short, and they returned answer that if Crassus wanted supplies from them he must return the hostages he held. Crassus communicated this answer to Cæsar, who at once resolved on completely crushing a people whose maritime power he disliked.

He accordingly gave orders to his lieutenant to set the people on the Loire to work building ships. He also commanded those of what we now call Poitou and the Saintonges to furnish vessels ; and he required a fleet to be got ready in the Mediterranean to be despatched in spring to the mouth of the Loire. Then he commanded Decimus Brutus, who was destined to be his murderer, to take under him the combined fleets.

As soon as the winter broke up Cæsar himself hastened to the scene of operations, and began his attack on the Veneti of what is now the Morbihan. Here he found that he had a difficult task on his hands. The natives escaped to islands, and defied him. The sea is shallow, and there are great expanses of sand left dry when the tide retreats. These stretches of sand would enable him to reach the islands where the Veneti were entrenched, but exposed his army to be caught and swept away by the returning tide.

Cæsar thereupon set to work building causeways from the land to the islets sufficiently elevated to ensure against disaster, and the remains of some of

these great works may still be traced.\* But he was again baffled, for no sooner did he march upon one of these islands along his causeway than the Veneti entered their boats, carrying off all their goods, and took refuge in another.

Nothing could be done to subdue such a people unless their fleet were destroyed. Meanwhile the spring and summer had been wasted. Then news reached Cæsar of the junction of the fleets he had ordered at the mouth of the Loire, and he hastened to see the naval conflict that was to ensue; for the Veneti, understanding that the Roman galleys were coming out against them, spread their leather sails, and made for the estuary of the Loire.

The land on the northern bank of the river at that period had a different conformation from what it has now.

From Nantes in a north-westerly direction to Pont Château runs a ridge called the Sillon de Bretagne. West of this is a vast region of turf bog, La Grande Brière, in which lacustrine shells and deposits have been found, but which was not invaded by the sea. This in Cæsar's time was a huge lake or morass. The lagoon discharged its waters into the sea where is now S. Lyphard, which was from the time of Cæsar's conquest made into a port. South of this runs some high ground in a sweep to the Loire, from Guérande to S. Nazaire, and a spur projected into the sea where is now Le Croisic, separated from Guérande by wide salt marshes. Now Cæsar stationed

\* At Gavr-inis, Coulabre, Goalabre. *Bulletin de la Soc. des Côtes-du-Nord*, i. 1852.

himself at Le Croisic on this finger of high ground, which commanded the mouth of the Loire.

Brutus with his galleys came forth, and, as Cæsar tells us, the Roman vessels seemed mere dwarfs beside the Venetian giants, which numbered 220 sail, that bore down on the Roman galleys, their great hide sails swelling in the wind and the sea foaming from their bows.

Brutus was afraid of having all his boats swamped and sunk, and he was meditating a retreat to the shore, and entrenching his soldiers, when all at once the wind fell. Therewith the great sails of the Venetians became useless. Brutus saw his opportunity. He was able now with his oared galleys to attack each Venetian vessel separately from all sides. He sent two and three galleys against each, and lest the wind should spring up, and enable the Venetians to escape, by means of reaping-hooks attached to long spars he cut their cordage.

The Romans now had not only the advantage of being able to assail each vessel of the enemy singly, but also they were supplied with bows and arrows and with leaden bolts, whereas the enemy were unfurnished with projectiles. The Roman galleys, that moved with as much rapidity as do steamboats now, ran past the hulks, pouring on the decks a hail of arrows and bolts, and when they had swept them, boarded the enemy.

The Veneti in the other ships were unable to come to the aid of such as were assailed, and were forced to await their turn. By this means the Romans were able to destroy their enemies piecemeal. The

unhappy Veneti fought desperately, but were overwhelmed by numbers. They fell sword in hand, or leaped into the sea, there to perish by drowning.\*

Brutus, having captured all the vessels, brought his prisoners to Cæsar. The latter had the throats cut of all those who constituted what he calls the senate, that is to say of the nobility, and sold all the rest as slaves to the dealers in human flesh who always attended a Roman army.

Thus Cæsar pretty well exterminated a people of great commercial ability and naval skill. It was the only idea he had of repressing their monopoly of the trade with Britain; and he did it in order that the traffic in tin might thenceforth be carried on in Roman bottoms.

The destruction of the Veneti was a crushing blow to all the Armorican tribes. In the year B.C. 52, when Vercingetorix was besieged by Cæsar in Alesia, a supreme appeal went forth to the Gaulish patriots to rally to his aid. Each of the Armorican peoples sent a contingent of three thousand men, only the Veneti were too reduced to be able to send any.

The Romans settled themselves in the country, erected camps, made roads, built villas, and ate and exported oysters.

Then came the Frank invasion, and Vannes itself became a Franco-Gallic city, keeping up traditions of Roman culture, of municipal government, and ecclesiastical order.

Meantime every summer saw fleets of refugee

\* I follow the account in Dio Cassius rather than that given by Cæsar, who has coloured his to suit his own purposes.

Britons arrive on the coast, and these new-comers colonised throughout the country, and constituted themselves a nation under their princes. At Belle-isle is Le Palais, and the church there looks to S. Geraint as its founder—that is Geraint, Prince of Devon, the husband of the fair Enid, a gallant prince who fell in 522 at Langport, in Somersetshire, fighting against the Saxons.

There are two or three other foundations of his in Brittany, and this seems to indicate that he had visited it, and that he claimed an overlordship over the colonists.\*

However, as the native British kings failed to maintain themselves in their own land, they ceased to exercise any authority in Armorica.

Vannes was soon enveloped on all sides by the waves of new-comers, who would not submit to the crosier of the bishop nor recognise the secular power of the Frank lieutenants.

In or about 550 Gweroc, Count of the Britons in the region round Vannes, died and left five sons, of whom the only ones whose names have come to us are Macliau and Canao.

According to Celtic custom, at once the country should have been divided into five equal shares, of

\* A suburb of Vannes is that of S. Solomon. It is now held that the patron is that infamous wretch who murdered his uncle, and was himself assassinated in 874. But it is possible that he may have supplanted his namesake, the son of King Geraint, and husband of S. Gwen, who receives a cult as well. Gwen was sister of S. Nonna, the mother of S. David. Hagiographers have admitted that there was a saintly Solomon earlier than the murderer-saint, who has everywhere taken his place.

which each son would have had one ; but such slices were not large enough to satisfy lusty appetites, and Canao at once murdered three of his brothers, and would have killed Macliau as well, had not the latter run for his life and taken refuge with Conmore, Regent of Domnonia.

Canao sent to demand his brother. Conmore made Macliau crawl into a tomb, and then set up a monument over him, bearing his name and title and date of decease. This he showed to the messengers of Canao, who departed satisfied that Macliau was dead and buried.

No sooner were they gone than Macliau crept forth, and, finding that Conmore's power was failing, made a bold dash into the city of Vannes itself, which was not in the hands of his brother, and proposed himself to the citizens as their bishop, the see being at that moment tenantless. They consented, and he was consecrated bishop. To meet the Latin ecclesiastical prejudices of the people of Vannes, he dismissed his wife and children. This took place in 552.

About eight years later Canao received a refugee at his court, Chramm, son of Clothair I., King of Soissons, who had rebelled against his father, and was forced to find refuge in flight.

There had probably been simmering hostilities between the Bretons and the Franks, and Canao was quite willing to take up arms on behalf of Chramm.

Clothair raised a large army and invaded the district of Vannes. On the day upon which the two armies met a battle ensued that was interrupted

by the coming on of night. Then the Breton chief said to Chramm, "I do not like the idea of your marching against your own father. Let me manage the whole thing, and I will fall on him during the night."

Chramm refused, as he desired the battle to be fought out by daylight, and his folly proved fatal to his cause. Next day the Bretons were utterly defeated, and took to flight. Chramm escaped to the coast to take ship for one of the islands, or perhaps for England. But he was much attached to his wife and daughters, and he left his boats to go in quest of them. This lost him; he fell into the hands of the Franks, who shut him up with his wife and daughters in a rude wood cabin belonging to a fisherman, and thatched with reed, and announced the fact to Clothair. "As he is my son, strangle him," said the father; "as to the women, burn them alive."

Accordingly Chramm was throttled with a kerchief passed round his neck, and then the doors of the hovel were closed and fire applied.

The shrieking women perished in the flames, and Clothair returned to Soissons, comparing himself to David, who had suffered from the rebellion of Absalom.

No sooner did Bishop Macliau hear of the death of his brother Canao, than he sent for his wife and children, and proclaimed himself Count as well as Bishop of Vannes. He was finally killed in 577, along with two of his sons, by Tewdrig, Prince of Cornouaille. His successor in the see of Vannes was Regalis, who complained bitterly: "Here, in this



city, we are as captives in the midst of the Britons, we are subjected to their burdensome yoke."

Vannes preserves in its walls traces of Roman building, but the fortifications that remain belong mainly to the time of John II., Duke of Brittany (1286-1305). The most picturesque portion is the gateway east of the cathedral, the *Porte S. Patern*.

The cathedral church is one likely to perplex those who do not know its history. It was a Romanesque church, of cruciform shape, with a central tower at the cross. This threatened to give way in the fifteenth century (1454-76), and internal Flamboyant buttresses were erected, towards the nave, ornamented somewhat fantastically. At the same time the nave was rebuilt under one span, without side aisles, but with chapels between the buttresses. As the nave was much wider than the tower, the lower portion of the latter had to be tied into the walls of the church by what are actually flying buttresses doubly pierced, presenting a very quaint effect.

Now the Archdeacon Jean Daniélo spent some years in Rome, and was so delighted with classic architecture he saw there, that on his return to Vannes in 1537, he undertook to show the chapter the superiority of the Roman style over Gothic, and for this purpose, at his own cost, erected the circular chapel on the north side.

In 1770 the chapter pulled down the central tower and the Romanesque apse and choir and erected the present structure, which is by no means ineffective. At the same time they vaulted over the nave, and because traceried windows did not comport with

their ideas of beauty, hacked out all the mullions and foliations. The tracery that now fills them was inserted in 1845, when also the interior and exterior galleries were constructed.\*

The roof of the choir and apse is too low for that of nave and transepts, and the effect externally is bad; but the interior appearance is better than might have been anticipated in a building of the period, and than it deserved to be, considering the way in which funds were raised to build it.

The chapter, instead of appealing to the diocese to erect the choir for the love of God, obtained a budget of indulgences from the Pope, which they hawked about Brittany and sold till the people were glutted and would have no more; and then funds were obtained for the completion by means of a lottery.

In the north transept are preserved the relics of S. Vincent Ferrier; his head is in a silver bust that represents him. The forehead is narrow and the expression unpleasant. The impression produced by this likeness is that he was a man entirely devoid of largeness of mind, but with great force of character and stubbornness of will. He is usually represented with wings and carrying a trumpet, the wings signifying the celerity with which he flew about the country as a revivalist preacher; the trumpet symbolises the sonorousness of his voice.

S. Vincent Ferrier died in 1419, and his day is

\* For the cathedral see LE MENÉ, *Hist. de l'Eglise Cathédral de Vannes*. Galles, Vannes, 1882.

For the town, LE MENÉ, *Topographie Historique de Vannes*. Galles, Vannes, 1897.

April 5th, but the pardon is held on the first Sunday in September, when great numbers of pilgrims arrive, and the singing in the cathedral of their *cantiques* is pleasing, beside which it furnishes an opportunity for seeing the costumes from the islets in the Morbihan.

The Morbihan is an inland sheet of shallow tidal water that communicates with the ocean by a channel at Arzon. It is studded with islands, and runs into numerous creeks. Two promontories shut it in from the Atlantic billows, that of Rhuys and that of Locmariaker. But outside these crablike claws is a range of islets and sandbanks from the peninsula of Quiberon to that of Croisic, and further seaward again is the large island of Belle Ile. Morbihan signifies "the little sea," and it has given its name to the department. It has this peculiarity, that no rivers, only rills, flow into it. The "river of Auray," which is navigable for some twelve miles, is really a creek of salt water, and the thread of sweet water that flows through it at low tides is insignificant. The Morbihan has with justice been likened in shape to a vineleaf, and presents very different aspects when the tide is in flow from what it does at ebb. There are long tracts that are uncovered when the tide is out, of *behin* or black mud, neither pleasant to the sight nor to the smell.

The largest island is L'île aux Moines, and the most interesting Gavr-inis, on account of its great cairn and covered avenue, the walls of which are sculptured with mysterious symbols. It is indeed one of many puzzles to the archæologist to explain why these

carved monuments should be found in the islands of the Morbihan and none about Carnac and north of it. The sculpture much resembles that of the sepulchral chamber in the tumulus of New Grange, near Drogheda.

Stone axes are figured on the slabs at Gavr-inis and symbols like escutcheons, but most of the ornamentation seems to be taken from tattoo marks on the body, which signify tribal distinctions.

The inhabitants of the islands adhere to their old costumes ; the men are all fishers, and the women are said to possess the privilege, confined to English girls in leap year, of proposing to the men.

The peninsula of schist rock of Rhuy is some twenty miles long and only six across. On it Gildas, the historian of the British, founded a monastery in the sixth century. His bitter invective against the native princes made it impossible for him to remain longer in Britain, and he retired to Armorica, where he founded not only the monastery at Rhuy but another further inland.

Two Lives of Gildas exist, one written at Glastonbury and the other at Rhuy, and the latter supplements the former. From his own writings we obtain something more.

The name Gildas is merely a form of Culdeus, and his first name was Aneurin. He was son of Caw and grandson of Geraint, who, as we have seen, had a palace on Belle Ile. His father, Caw, was Lord of the Wall, and his duties were to defend the Great Wall against the incursions of the Picts and the Scotie settlers on the west coast of Alba.

Gildas was born, as he tells us himself, in the year of the battle of Mount Badon. For reasons with which I will not trouble the reader I would place the date at 493, which has this advantage, that the chronology of his life becomes by this means consistent.

He was sent in his teens to S. Illtyd, who had a monastery in Caldey Isle, off the coast of Pembroke-shire, where he was schoolfellow with S. Samson and S. Paul of Leon, both of whom were to settle in Brittany. But he left as he approached manhood and joined his father in North Britain, and was engaged in the terrible battle of Catraeth. The disasters of this battle form the subject of his noble poem "Y Gododin," still extant. The result of this defeat was that Caw and his sons abandoned the defence of the wall and retired into North Wales, where Maelgwn, the king, gave them lands, and all but one embraced the ecclesiastical profession. The one who did not was Hoel, who took to arms.

At what time Gildas married we do not know. It was not regarded as inconsistent with the ecclesiastical profession to have a wife. Gildas became the father of several sons, whereof one, Kenneth, was a cripple, and became a hermit in Gower, but also married and had a family.

Hoel and his brothers quarrelled with Arthur. According to one account Hoel ventured to make love to a lady whom Arthur admired, and they fought, and Hoel wounded Arthur in the thigh, so that ever after he limped. As Hoel one day sneered at the king for his halting, Arthur, in a rage, had

him out in the street of Ruthin and hacked off his head.

The execution of Hoel gave great offence, and Arthur was obliged to compound the matter with the family of Caw.

For a time Gildas was in Ireland, where he had some correspondence with S. Bridget, about 524.

Gildas moved from Ireland to the Scotie colonies in the west of Scotland, but was recalled by the murder of Hoel, that took place about 528.

Gildas now made the acquaintance of S. Cadoc, and with him retired, one to the Flat and the other to the Steep Holme, islets in the Bristol Channel. There they lived on birds' eggs and fish. At the end of seven years Gildas was forced to decamp, on account of the incursions of the northern pirates, and then he took refuge in Glastonbury.

Whilst he was there Meluas, king of what is now Somersetshire, carried off Gwenever, Arthur's wife, and retreated with her to Glastonbury. Arthur summoned the men of Devon and Cornwall to his aid and laid siege to the place. Gildas and the abbot at last reconciled the kings; Arthur was quite content to have Gwenever restored to him.

From Glastonbury Gildas departed for Brittany, whither so many of his monastic friends had already gone. He, however, first visited Paris to obtain leave from Childebert to form a foundation in Armorica. Leave having been given him, he settled at Rhuys, and there, in all probability, he wrote his spiteful letter on British history. As Maelgwn, whom he attacks—a man who had shown great hospitality

to his family—died in 547, the history must have been written before that date.

He was not long at Rhuys before he was involved in a quarrel with Conmore, lieutenant for Childebert in Domnonia. The story shall be told when we come to Carhaix. Conmore had mortally offended Gildas, and in consequence the latter united with Huarvé, as already told, in the cursing of the prince from the summit of the Menez-bré.

After the death of S. Patrick there had been a great relapse of the natives into heathenism, and King Airmire invited him over to restore the Christian faith. He and S. Cadoc went there together, and it was due to them, and the flow of missionaries with which S. David supplied them, that Christianity was revived in the island.

Gildas died in 570. His last request was that his body might be put in a boat and committed to the waves.\* This was done, but the people on the mainland, in their greed for relics, pursued it in boats. However, before reaching it, a wave swept over the little vessel, and the body sank. Three months later a corpse was washed up on the sands at Le Croisic, which the monks of Rhuys were pleased to suppose was that of their abbot. How, after having been rolled about in the sea for three months, they were able to recognise it we are not told. But it answered their purpose, whosoever the body was; it originated a cult, and some of the relics of this body, probably

\* This smacks of a lingering paganism in the heart of Gildas. He desired his mortal remains to be shipped to the Land of the Blessed under the setting sun.

not that of Gildas at all, but of some sailor, are still shown at S. Gildas de Rhuys.

The church there is utterly uninteresting architecturally, as it is in the hideous baroque style. It is attached to the convent of the Sisters "du Père Eternel." The monastery receives ladies *en pension* who desire to enjoy the sea-bathing, but no men are admitted. At Arzon, further on the point, are megalithic remains, and the great tumulus, "Le Butte de Tumiach," that has been explored.

The abbey of Rhuys had Abelard at one time as its head. In 1125 Abelard gave up his charge of the Paraclete, near Nogent-sur-Seine, to Heloise, and was elected by the monks of Rhuys as their superior. But he was too strict in his rule to please them, and they rose in revolt; they attempted to poison and then to stab him. At length in disgust he left, and died in 1142.

At Vannes I met with a gentleman with his wife, returned from Algeria, who had come to the Morbihan in quest of a warm and sunny region where they might build a house and settle for the rest of their days. They had chosen an unfortunate time of rain and storm.

Said monsieur to me, "I was urged to go to Belle Ile; there I was assured almost tropical vegetation luxuriated. I went in an abominable little boat that pitched and tossed when we got out of the Morbihan on to the ocean. At Belle Ile I found only colonies of young criminals and cases of stale sardines. I saw no cactus, no myrtles; I was shown an orange tree the size of a cabbage, but its solitary



golden fruit had been blown away by the wind, which was playing ball with it on the waves. I was never so pitched in my life in the four hours I was at sea; my feet were so often above my head, that at last I began to think with my toes; and, worst of all, I had no meal before starting."

"But," said I, "you took in a *déjeuner* on board?"

"*Mais, monsieur ! tout au contraire.*"

## CHAPTER XVII

### PLOERMEL

S. Arthmael—S. Samson's cross at Llantwit—The story of Armel in stained glass—Church—North door—Josselin—The church—The Battle of Thirty—The forest of Brociliande—Merlin—The fountain of Baranton—The Brothers of Christian Instruction—The Abbé de la Mennais—Education in France—Growth of the orders.

PLOERMEL is situated on rising ground near the pretty lake that goes by the name of l'Etang du Duc, the sides of which present pleasing scenes of quiet beauty.

Ploermel, the *Plou* of S. Arthmael, owes its origin to a saint of that name. On an early cross at Llantwit, near Cardiff, is an inscription to the effect that Samson set up this stone for the good of his soul and those of Juthael the king and of Arthmael. Some Welsh antiquaries suppose that this stone is later than the sixth century. But if so, it is very strange that there should occur such a coincidence of names at two periods; for Arthmael was engaged along with Samson in the planting of Judual or Juthael on the throne.

Arthmael, or Armel, was born in Glamorgan, but he crossed into Leon, and founded a settlement there at Plouarzel, but was driven away by the usurper

Conmore. He then threw in his fortunes with S. Samson, and energetically worked for the overthrow of the prince. We find him at the court of Childebert, at the same time as Samson, engaged in the same attempt, to induce the Frank king to permit an insurrection in favour of Judual. When the usurper had been defeated and killed, Judual rewarded Arthmael with the grant of the land by the lake where now stands Ploermel. The founder died about 560. In a window in a north chapel in the church is his story in stained glass of the fifteenth century in eight compartments; the subjects are as follows:

1. Armel, arriving from Britain, disembarks.
2. He with his company receives the ambassadors of Childebert, summoning him to court.
3. The saint cures lepers and lame men in the palace of the Frank king.
4. Childebert at the door of his palace dismisses Armel, who undertakes to deliver the land from a monster.\*
5. Armel meets the dragon and puts his stole about it.
6. He leads the creature to a river and precipitates it into the water of the Seiche.
7. He heals divers sick persons.
8. Armel dies, lying in his grave, and an angel bears a legend in the sky.

The church of Ploermel is very fine, of the period of transition from Flamboyant to Renaissance, and with a late tower. Its chief glory is the stained-glass windows, coeval with the church. Of these the finest

\* The dragon probably symbolises the tyrant Conmore.

is a Jesse tree on the south; the next in beauty is a Pentecost on the north side.

The church possesses a north transept entrance that presents an interesting study of the change from one fashion to another.

A huge arch encloses both the double doorway and a fine Flamboyant window above it. The arch is richly carved, as are the doorways. The foliage is Flamboyant in character; the figure-carving represents sacred subjects and sundry virtues. But on the south side is a buttress that was most elaborately though shallowly carved when the Renaissance was in full swing. Thence all trace of Gothic feeling has gone, indeed all trace of Christian sentiment as well. The subjects chosen are mostly grotesque: a woman pulling her husband by the nose with one hand, while she plucks off his hat with the other; a cobbler stitching up his wife's mouth; a naked woman on the back of a nude man, each blowing a trumpet; also sundry monsters.

A mile out of Ploërmel on the Vannes road is the holy well of the saint, with his figure in a niche above the water in a picturesque situation under a great oak tree.

West of Ploërmel is Josselin, where is the finest castle in Brittany; it belongs to the Duke de Rohan, who has put it in repair.

The river face of the castle presents all the characteristics of the fortress of the Middle Ages, but the courtyard reveals exquisite work of the early Renaissance period. The prevailing ornament is ingeniously made up of interlacing patterns binding



CHATEAU DE JOSSELIN



together A and V, as this portion of the château was constructed by Alain V., Viscount of Rohan, and à + (*à plus*), the motto of the Rohans.

In the church is the tomb of Olivier de Clisson and his wife Marguerite de Rohan, heiress of Josselin.

On the way to Josselin from Ploermel the obelisk is passed that marks the site where took place the Battle of Thirty. By the Breton peasant the long agony of the War of Succession is forgotten, and only the glorious day of the fight on the common of Croix de Mi-Voie is remembered, in which thirty Bretons defeated as many English. The facts were these. A challenge was sent by the Sieur de Beaumanoir on the Franco-Breton side to Bembro, or Bramber, the Anglo-Breton captain.

Thirty on each side were to fight, but, as appears from the list of names, there were but very few English—four at most—on the side of Bramber. His company was made up of Gascons, Flemings, and Bretons.

On the appointed day, after hearing Mass, the champions met at the Oak of Mi-Voie. They were armed with lances and hatchets. One man carried a scythe, another an implement armed with crooks.

All descended from their horses, for the combat was to be on foot. The two companies were drawn up in line on the heath facing one another; the heralds sounded, and both parties rushed forward eager for the fray. At the first shock the Franco-Bretons were checked, they lost a man killed and another captured. Several were severely wounded.

Far from losing heart, they fought on desperately, and such a cloud of dust arose that the combatants could not be distinguished by the spectators. After a while, by mutual consent, both sides drew off to recover breath and estimate their losses.

"Sir," said a squire to Beaumanoir, "I think were I a knight it would nerve my arm to fight better."

"Kneel, then," said the Franco-Breton commander, and he knighted him on the field.

Hardly was this episode ended before the Anglo-Bretons came on, and Bramber, rushing upon De Beaumanoir and grasping him by the arm, cried, "Robert, surrender, and I will not kill thee, but present thee this evening to my sweetheart."

"It is I," returned Beaumanoir, "who intend offering thee to my lady."

Two of the French ran up; one with his lance transfixing Bramber, and the other hewed him down with his sword.

Taking advantage of the confusion caused by the fall of the captain, the Franco-Breton prisoners made their escape, and killed Dagworth and two Flemish mercenaries.

Calverley and Knollys avenged their chief by wounding De Beaumanoir. The marshal, overcome by the heat and by fatigue, retreated, and called for water.

"Drink thy blood, Beaumanoir!" replied a voice from the French ranks. The marshal, recovering his vigour, rushed again upon the English. But these presented an insuperable wall of steel, till Guillaume de Montauban, running to his horse, mounted it.



"Shame on thee, squire!" shouted Beaumanoir, thinking the man meditated flight.

"Hold to thy duty and I will hold to mine!" retorted Montauban. Then, thundering down on the English rank, he broke it, made his horse plunge right and left, and brought confusion into the line. The French, profiting by this stratagem, followed, and the victory was theirs.

The Franco-Bretons had lost five killed, the Anglo-Bretons nine. Of those that remained not one but was grievously wounded.

French writers maintain that the act of Montauban was not a contravention of the terms agreed on before the combat; but to all appearance it was so.

A rhymed narrative of the battle exists in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, and has several times been printed. Most of the MSS. of Froissart are silent concerning the fight. The battle took place on March 27th, 1350.

To the east of Ploermel stretched at one time the mighty forest of Brociliande, so famous in the poems and romances of chivalry. Of it now the sole remains is the wood of Paimpont, near Plélan.

At the beginning of the Christian era and throughout the Roman occupation the centre of Armorica was covered by one vast forest, which sent its streamers of wood down the rivers to the coast. The Roman road from what is now Rennes to Corseul cut through an arm of it, but the way from Nantes to Vannes skirted it; from Vannes to Carhaix it traversed it. But otherwise the whole interior to the Vilaine from the sources of the Ellé, Odet, and the

Elorn was a mighty wilderness of trees, uninhabited by man, and given over to the wild beasts. When the British settlers arrived, their first work was the making of clearings, and the monastic establishments furnished centres from which the land was gradually divested of its green mantle and was made available for culture. By degrees it shrank, and the forest of Brecilien, or Brociliande, remained through the Middle Ages its main representative, still retaining much of mystery and impressing the imagination with the awe that the mighty primeval forest had inspired.

Thus it is spoken of in the Welsh tales of the twelfth century. Hither it was that Merlin, the magician and prophet, retired, and where he remained spellbound by the wood fairy Vivienne.

What had become of the wise counsellor was asked in Arthur's court, and Gawain was sent in quest of him. He found Merlin chanting his lays by the side of a fountain in the depths of the forest, under a flowering thorn. No inducement would draw him back to court; he remained there bound by the fascinations of the fairy Vivienne. According to one version of the story, this fairy induced him to enter a hollow tree, which then closed about him.

The fountain is that of Baranton.

It occurs prominently in the story of the "Lady of the Spring." In the Middle Ages all sorts of marvels were related of it. Wace, who was born in 1096, speaks of its wonders, and tells us that he journeyed into Brittany to visit it and learn if what was told were true. In the same century William le Breton,

chaplain of Philip Augustus, says this: "What are the causes that produce the marvels of the fountain of Breclian? Whoever draws water from it, and scatters a few drops around, causes clouds to gather in the sky, charged with hail, thunder to roll, and the air to be darkened. Those who do so wish they had never done such a thing, so profound is their terror. This is a marvel, but it is true. Many persons have assured me of it."

In the thirteenth century in the Ordinances of the Count of Laval is an entry to this effect: "Hard by the fountain of Belenton (Baranton) is a great stone that is called *Le Perron de Belenton*; and whensoever the seigneur of Montfort goes to the said fountain and sprinkles the stone with water drawn from the fountain, however hot the weather may be, at once rain begins to fall throughout the neighbourhood, so that the fields are moistened and the agriculture prospers."

To this day the same opinion holds. In August, and whenever there is drought, the inhabitants of the parishes round go there in procession, with clergy and banners and crosses, and the priest of the parish blesses the spring, dips the holy water brush in it, and sprinkles with it a flat stone that is held to be the tomb of Merlin. This is firmly believed to produce rain.

The well of Baranton is on the fringe of the forest west of Plélan, near the frontier of the department, and the Lande de Concoret. Hard by is a ruined dolmen, which is held to be the tomb of Merlin. The fountain is believed to utter moans on the

approach of a storm. Children now drop pins into the water, saying, "Ris donc, fontaine de Baranton, et je te donnerai une épingle."

The forest of Paimpont contains a number of small lakes, fourteen in all, the largest of which is Etang de Comper.

Ploermel is the headquarters of the *Frères de l'Instruction Chrétienne*, founded by the Abbé la Mennais, who died in 1860.

The abbé was born at S. Malo in 1780, and lived through the terrible times of the Revolution. When the bishop, Mgr. de Pressigny, was about to fly to England, the father of the young Jean Marie concealed him in his house, and contrived to get him on board ship. During the Terror the La Mennais family did all in their power to preserve the priests who were in hiding, and arranged where the faithful were to meet them for the ministrations of religion.

When the Terror was at an end the bishop returned to France. Jean Marie de la Mennais went to him, and assured him that the ambition of his life was to enter Holy Orders.

"Monseigneur," said he, "I have seen in Brittany priests mount the scaffold; I have seen their blood flow under the axe of the persecutors; and these sights only deepened in me the resolve, if need be, to die for the same cause."

He received minor orders in 1801, and that of priest in 1804. But the bent of his life was towards the education of the young. He felt more and more every day that the only way in which to combat the growing infidelity in France was to get hold of

the youth and impress it with religious convictions and the spirit of Christian morality.

The militant anti-Christian attitude adopted by the Republican Government has made the Church more resolute in its efforts to keep hold upon the young, and has brought into prominence the work of De la Mennais.

The educational problem in France is far greater than it is in England. Elementary education there, as with us, is compulsory and free, and religion is absolutely and entirely banished from every Government school in town and country. These schools are supported by taxes, and there are no such things as Government grants.

The condition of affairs was desperate. The Church saw herself face to face with the danger of losing all her young. She was thrown wholly on her own resources, and she has bravely and splendidly grappled with the difficulties.

Without attempting to make any compromise with the Educational Department, and in spite of the Government having in every town and village its own schools, with well-paid teachers, in spite of the most vexatious and continuous opposition from the Government and the local authorities, she has now some 40,000 elementary schools so sound in the education afforded and good in the order kept, that they are more than able to hold their own against their rivals.

Now it may well be asked, How is this done?

I will quote in answer the words of Mr. W. J. Alston.

“The love of God and zeal for souls are the secrets. The teaching is voluntary, the subscriptions are voluntary, and all Catholics co-operate in the work. The teachers look upon this work not as a profession, but as a *vocation* from God, and they are banded together in a religious order wherein they live in community the life of apostolic poverty, holy chastity, and obedience under a rigorous rule, spending some three hours morning and evening in prayer and worship. The members of the *Frères d'Ecoles Chrétiennes* and *d'Instruction Chrétienne* do not become clerics, and in order that their great object—the education of the poor—may be kept continually before them, they are not allowed by their original rule either to study or teach Latin.

“To build and support these Christian schools no less than sixty million francs are raised yearly by voluntary subscriptions; all Catholics, even the humblest and poorest, co-operating in this work. The money is chiefly raised by what is called ‘The Sou of Christian Schools,’ a widespread inter-diocesan guild, whose headquarters in Paris is practically the ‘Education Department’ of *Christian France*. This guild enrols most of the devout Catholics of France, and binds them to a share in the good work. Some undertake to give a sou a week, some a sou a day, some more. Then in town and country there are various committees of lay people who undertake active work, such as making clothes for poor children; of old scholars who keep a kindly eye on the children after leaving school and obtain employment for them; another buys school

materials and prizes; another is composed of voluntary catechists who assist M. le Curé in the preparation for first Communion, and so on. By means of this remarkable organisation the rich and poor of all classes are bonded together to give and to work for the Christian schools. One is anxious for the future generations in England, when one reflects that the Church here has not yet risen to her responsibility in the future.

"The Christian brothers do not merely see to elementary education; their system corresponds to the Government Lycées and Ecoles Normales, and they give secondary and technical education, and teach the science of agriculture in their agricultural colleges. The object of the Christian schools is not merely that there should be 'religious instruction,' but that religion should rule, inspire, and ennoble all other teaching."\*

The Brotherhood of Christian Instruction was founded in 1820. In 1825 it already consisted of a hundred and thirty members; in 1837 the numbers had risen to six hundred and fifty. De la Mennais died in 1860, but his work remains and grows. To the brothers is confided the education of the young in Brittany, the south-west of France, and in many of the colonies. There is no sign of diminution in enthusiasm among the members, or of declension in the numbers of those who apply to join the community.

Now we cannot put at less than three the numbers

\* "The Church in France," in *Church Review*, September 6th, 1900.

of brothers employed in each school. That gives a total of 120,000 young men devoted to the religious training of boys. Not one is paid a franc. All do their work voluntarily, and all are under vows not to marry. It can be no other. This is forced on them. The funds available will support a number of unmarried teachers who receive no pay, but they are not sufficient to sustain salaried schoolmasters with wives and families.

In France, with a dwindling population, this is a serious matter. The Republican Government has forced this condition of affairs on the Church, and the Church has risen to meet her responsibilities. She must feed the lambs of Christ, or be unfaithful to her Master. But it seriously affects the growth of population, and the Republic has to thank only itself for so doing.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### CARHAIX

Vorganium—The counts of Poher—Church of S. Tremeur—Story of Tremor—Plouguer—Huelgoat—S. Herbot—His story—Oblation of cows' tails—The economic line—Scaër—Fountain of Ste. Caudide.

CARHAIX is built on the site of the old Roman town of Vorganium, of which numerous remains have been found. Later on it was the fortress and residence of the counts of Poher (the Highland), a district embraced within the arms of the Montagnes d'Arrée and the Montagnes Noires, a large upland basin. The town stands very high, and is a dull place, but it is in railway communication with Guingamp and Morlaix on one side, and with Quimper and Vannes on the other, by a branch that reaches the main line at Rosporden.

The town possesses two churches, that of S. Tremeur and that of Plouguer.

Conmore, of whom I have often spoken, had lost his first wife, and for a second he set his mind on Tryphena, the daughter of Gweroc, Count of Vannes. Gweroc was old; he had five sons, and on his death the brothers were certain to fly at one another's throats. Conmore had already usurped the princi-

pality of Domnonia, and he thought he saw his way to getting hold as well of Vannes. So he sent to ask for the hand of Tryphena. Weroc knew the unscrupulous and ambitious character of the man, and refused.

Then Conmore had recourse to Gildas, Abbot of Rhuys, and he cajoled him into acting as his go-between. The saint with difficulty induced Gweroc to give way, and Conmore and Tryphena were married.

At first their married life was happy enough. Conmore allied himself with Macliau, one of the sons of Gweroc, and urged the old count to divide the county between himself and Macliau. Gweroc absolutely refused, and Conmore saw that his ambitious scheme was not likely to be carried out in the way he had hoped.

Now one person who stood in his way was Tremor, who was Tryphena's son by a former husband.\*

Conmore had him assassinated in his court at Carhaix.

This and his growing aversion from Tryphena impelled her to flight. She escaped from the place, and fled in the direction of Vannes. Conmore pursued, but she was able to hide in the forest, make her way in safety to Vannes, and to throw herself on the protection of Gildas. This grim old saint, touched where most sensitive, in his self-esteem—for he had

\* So only can the story be reconciled with history. The legend makes Tremor the son of Conmore; but this is impossible, as shortly after the curse pronounced on Conmore on Menez-bré he was killed in the general insurrection, 555.

negotiated the marriage—took the matter up, and uniting with Huarvé, the blind saint, summoned the gathering on Menez-bré, already described, in which Conmore was solemnly cursed. The great rising in Domnonia ensued, aided by Weroc in Vannes, and Conmore was defeated and killed.

Late legend writers have said that Conmore cut off the head of Tryphena with an axe, and that S. Gildas put it on again, and that after this event she gave birth to Tremor. But all this is nonsense, the mere embroidery of childish fancy over the threads of history.

S. Tremor is represented over the west entrance to the parish church of Carhaix holding his head in his hands, and is figured as a full-grown man.

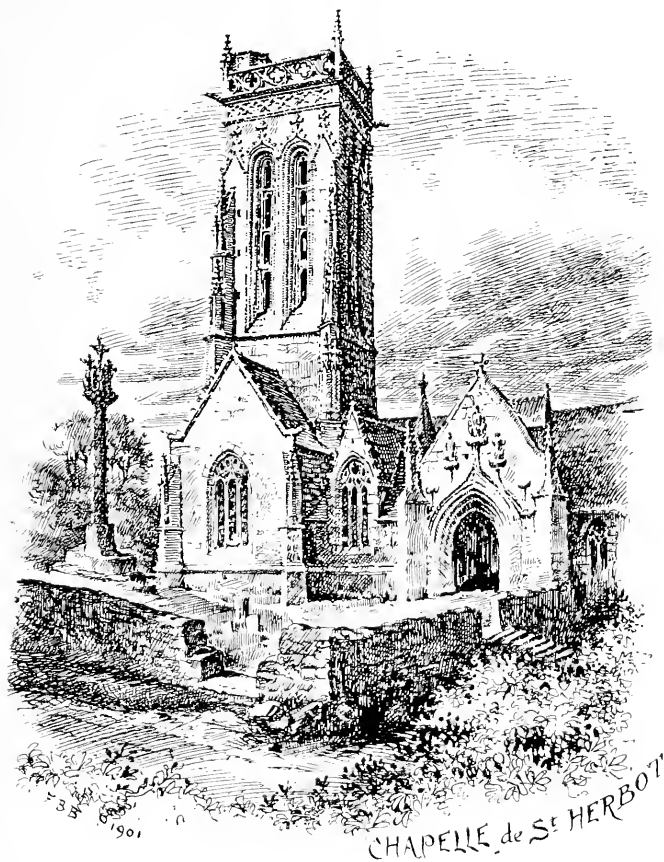
This church has been rebuilt with the exception of the tower.

In the town is an old house, the lower stage of Kersanton stone sculptured, the upper stories of oak and slate, the oak carved to represent knights and men-at-arms.

Plouguer Church, in a suburb of Carhaix, was originally early Romanesque, and some of the plain piers and arches and small round-headed windows remain in the nave. But it was for the most part rebuilt in the fifteenth century. Then it was altered and spoiled in the seventeenth, when the tracery was cut away from the windows, and the beautiful *jubé* or rood-screen removed. Portions of this latter have been worked up into the backs of stalls behind the high altar. The tower, intended to support a spire which was never added, is remarkably good.

From Carhaix Huelgoat should be visited, a mountain village, where there are, however, no true mountains. It lies at the lower end of a lovely lake that decants in cascade down a gorge, forming the river Argent that flows between pine-clad heights. The scenery around is quite the prettiest in Brittany, and the little place offers pleasant headquarters in the summer. It is situated where the schist and granite join, and where accordingly metal veins occur. The lead mines have been worked since Roman times. The granite hereabouts is easily decomposed, and this has thrown it into masses of ruin. Wind and rain have eaten away the supports of the huge blocks, and then the masses fell. One not so upset is exhibited as a logan. The same atmospheric action has rounded the edges of all the rocks.

About four miles off, under the spurs of the Montagnes d'Arrée—let no one expect mountains, however—is the chapel of S. Herbot, beautifully situated among trees in a pleasant dip. It has a fine tower with pinnacles, and a square east end, all of Flamboyant work, but with buttresses at the east end added in 1616 and 1619. The chapel is really a fine church, though only opened for occasional Masses and for the pardon, which takes place on the 7th June, and is curious, as S. Herbot is here what S. Cornély is at Carnac, and S. Nicodème in the chapel that bears his name—the patron of horned cattle. In the church about the altar were formerly suspended many cow-tails that had been offered to the saint. Now the hair is heaped on two stone altars outside the screen.





This screen is very perfect, and is Renaissance. It has no loft, but is canopied within over the returned stalls. It is of admirable design and execution. In the windows is much excellent old glass. The stone-carved foliage of the west door and of the porch on the south is as good as that at S. Fiacre.

Herbot was a native of Britain, who, like so many others of his race, settled in Armorica. His Life was preserved in the church till between 1340 and 1350, when it perished in the war between Blois and Montfort, when the English pillaged the church. The only legend we have is based on tradition. He is popularly said to have preached at Berrien, but the women were angry with him because he drew the men away from the work of the fields to hear his sermons, and they stole his linen which he had hung on a hedge after a wash. Leaving Berrien, he went to Nank, and asked a farmer there to lend him a pair of oxen for ploughing. The man replied he had none to spare. So Herbot cursed Nank that thenceforth it should produce only good-for-nothing beasts. Coming to Rusquec, he met with a better reception. A farmer there bade him take from his herd what oxen he chose. Herbot selected two that were white. He harnessed these and ploughed his land. Afterwards the two white oxen would not leave him, but always, even after death, were to be found at nightfall couched in the porch of his chapel. Such farmers as desired their services had only to borrow them of S. Herbot at night, and return them before daybreak.

On one occasion, however, a grasping farmer did not return them, but locked them in his shed.

When he opened the door during the day they were gone, and since then they have no longer been at the service of men ; though still, it is said, they may be seen, ghost-like, couched in the porch of the chapel at night.

The sale of the cow-tails offered to S. Herbot amounts to a goodly sum in the year. As much as 1,800 lbs. of hair has been given. Although the amount of hair offered in ordinary years is considerable, yet in times of cattle plague it is doubled.

Pilgrims visit S. Herbot in May. Mondays and Fridays are the days preferred. The cattle are driven round the church, then led to the holy well, where they are made to drink, and whence also bottles of water are taken for use at home in the event of the cattle falling ill.

The tomb of the saint is in the choir. On it he is represented in hermit's garb, the hood thrown back ; his hair is long ; from the girdle hangs his breviary ; in one hand is a staff, and his feet repose on a lion.

A "ligne économique" runs from Guingamp by Carhaix to Rosporden. It is slow, and dawdles along its way, wasting much time unnecessarily. At Scaër, on the way to Rosporden, there is not much to be seen. The interesting old Romanesque church has been pulled down and a vulgar modern erection has taken its place. The patroness is Ste. Candide, whose fountain is reputed to have this miraculous property, that if a man drink thereof his breasts will fill with milk.



## CHAPTER XIX

### RENNES

An ugly town—Fire—Library—Forged Decretals—Museum—Ancient capital of Brittany—Siege in 1316-17—Single combats—Anne of Brittany—Her suitors—Her marriages—Jeanne de France—Character of Anne—*Allée couverte* of Essé—S. Armel—Castle of Les Roches—Corps-nuds.

SOME fifty years ago, when a child, I was in Rennes, and the impression the town left on my mind was that it was the very ugliest place I had then seen. Since that time I have been at Darmstadt, which bears the palm of being the most hideous capital in Europe. Mannheim approaches Darmstadt in unsightliness, but Rennes comes third. The reason is that the old town was destroyed by fire in 1720, and it was rebuilt at a period when the sense of beauty was extinct.

The town is divided in two by the river Vilaine, and the Haute Ville, in which are the principal edifices, the public buildings, and the promenades, is on the right bank. In the lower town, on the left bank, are the colleges, the Palais de Commerce, and the barracks. The material of which the town is constructed, a dull and dingy granite, assists in giving to it an uninviting appearance. The portion

of the city that was rebuilt after the great fire was constructed in that love of uniformity that prevailed in the eighteenth century. The cathedral is a horrible structure, begun in 1787 and finished in 1844. The church of S. Sauveur is in the Doric order, and was built in 1728. But S. Melaine is an old abbey church, part of which is Romanesque, continued in the fourteenth century, and completed in 1672. There are good quays by the river, and a public garden, Le Thabor, a pleasant and shady summer lounge.

Rennes has an excellent library, that contains, among other manuscripts, a copy of the Forged Decretals, that manufacture of the tenth century on which the papal claim to supremacy is based. When Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, received a copy he rubbed his eyes and wrote off to Rome to inquire whether this was a genuine collection of papal decrees from the time of S. Peter. The Pope promptly replied that they were trustworthy, and had always been preserved in the archives of the Roman Church.

One old gateway of Rennes subsists, the *Porte Mordelaise* of the fifteenth century. It is one of the scanty relics of antiquity that remain to the town.

Rennes, beside its library, possesses a really good museum, in which are preserved a number of old prints, portraits, and views that illustrate Brittany and its history.

Rennes was once a much more important place than it is now. It was the capital of the duchy, and it is now the seat of an archbishop. After the Revolution the sees of Dol and S. Malo were sup-

pressed and these added to the see of Rennes, which was made archiepiscopal.

Perhaps the most notable event in the history of the town is its siege by the Duke of Lancaster, which began in October, 1316, immediately after the crushing defeat of Poitiers and the ruin of the French cause.

The English army consisted of a thousand men-at-arms and fourteen or fifteen hundred archers. With this host Lancaster proceeded to invest the town, supposing that the heart of the French was so broken by their disasters that they would readily surrender the place.

Du Guesclin, however, hovered in the neighbourhood at the head of a small body of determined men, and harassed the rear of the besiegers and intercepted their convoys.

After several ineffectual assaults on the walls the Duke resolved on undermining them. The commandant of Rennes suspected as much, and ordered all who had houses near the wall to suspend their pots and pans in the cellars. As the English miners advanced with their work, the metal vessels above the mine were set in vibration and clinked. By this means he was made aware of the direction in which the mines were being pushed, and he proceeded to countermine. A furious conflict underground ensued when the two parties met. The defenders of the town drove the English back and destroyed their works.

Exasperated at this check, Lancaster had recourse to stratagem of another kind. Knowing that the inhabitants were reduced to straits for meat, he sent

a drove of swine to feed about the moat on the glacis, expecting that the garrison would make a sortie and attempt to capture them.

But the commandant got a sow, and tied her in one of the posterns by the feet. Her squeals attracted the herd, and all the swine ran towards her. Thereupon the bridge was lowered, and the sow was slowly withdrawn into the town, with the result that all the pigs ran in after her. Whereupon at once the draw-bridge was raised.

As the distress of the beleaguered town increased it was deemed necessary, or at least expedient, to communicate with Charles de Blois and urge him to come to its relief. A citizen volunteered ; he let himself down from the wall and swam the moat, whilst the garrison shouted and discharged bolts after him, as though he were a deserter. On being brought before the Duke, he averred that he had escaped out of the town, that the inhabitants were at the point of starvation, and that a convoy of five hundred German mercenaries with provisions was approaching.

Believing the story, the Duke at once despatched the larger portion of his forces to waylay the approaching body of men, and the pretended deserter took the occasion to effect his escape. He fled to Du Guesclin, who was at no great distance, and told him all. Bertrand at once marched against the ill-defended line, broke through, fired the English tents, and seized a hundred waggons laden with salt meat. The citizens threw open their gates, and Du Guesclin entered with the captured supplies.

Ascertaining that the drivers of the waggons were peasants, and that the food had been commandeered by the English, Du Guesclin ordered that full payment should be made for the meat and the drivers dismissed.

The Duke of Lancaster was so pleased to hear of the chivalrous conduct of Du Guesclin that he sent a herald into the town to invite Bertrand to visit him. Du Guesclin readily complied, and went unarmed into the English camp, where he was hospitably regaled.

Whilst sitting at table with the Duke an English knight, William Bramber, challenged him, and it was arranged that the combat should take place before the town, between the walls and the investing army.

The fight took place on the glaciis. The citizens and garrison crowded the summit of the wall; the English soldiery were not suffered to approach nearer than twenty lances' distance.

The Duke and the Earl of Pembroke kept the lists. When the signal was given the two champions rushed on each other with their lances at rest. The spear of the Breton pierced the shield of Bramber, but that of the latter struck the bassinet of Bertrand with such force as to almost unseat him. He, however, recovered his balance, and two more passages of arms were essayed without result. At the next onslaught Bertrand shore through the crest of his adversary, and the sword, glancing to the shoulder, cut the coat of mail and entered the flesh. Bramber reeled and fell from his horse and was carried from the field.

Bertrand received the congratulations of the Duke and returned within the walls of Rennes.

The ensuing night the English made a fresh assault on the town. Lancaster had erected a huge tower of timber on wheels, and this was run forward to the walls. Its several stages were filled with archers. But Du Guesclin made a sally, and set fire to the tower, which was soon in a blaze that illumined the walls and the camp of the besiegers.

Froissart has preserved for us a characteristic incident that occurred during the siege. An English knight, Sir John Bolton, had been out hunting with his hawk, and had succeeded in securing half a dozen partridges. Then he rode under the walls of the town and shouted to the sentinel that he desired a word with Du Guesclin. Now it chanced that at the time Bertrand's cousin, Olivier de Manny, was on the wall, and seeing the Englishman swinging the partridges, he called to him to inquire whether he had brought them there as a present to the fair ladies of Rennes.

"I will sell them to you willingly for blows," replied Bolton.

Thereupon the Breton knight jumped down from the wall into the moat, swam across, and offered to fight Bolton for the partridges.

After a long contest, De Manny proved the best man, and forced Bolton to carry the partridges in person into the town and present them to the ladies there. But De Manny had been so severely handled in the fight, that he needed certain herbs for his wounds which could not be procured in the town. He

accordingly sent Bolton back to the Duke of Lancaster, desiring permission to send someone through the English lines in quest of the needed simples.

The Duke returned word that he would not only allow this, but further, that he invited De Manny to come to him and be attended by his own physician. And Olivier de Manny accepted the offer, and was cured in the Duke's tent.

At length, on March 23rd, 1317, the siege was brought to an end by an express order sent from Edward III.

It was at Rennes that Charles VIII. met Anne of Brittany, and was betrothed to her.

A few lines is all that has hitherto been accorded to this interesting woman, who finally united the duchy to the crown of France, and thereby closed the long story of bloodshed and ravage which had been that of her native province for nigh on three hundred years. Her name is associated with many places in Brittany, her house is shown at Morlaix, a bell-tower she gave to Dinan; but it is chiefly with Rennes, as her principal place of residence, that her name is linked, and here, therefore, it is fitting that a summary of her life should be given.

Anne was born in 1476; she was the daughter of François II., Duke of Brittany, and when her father died in 1488, she was left the heiress to the ducal crown.

Jeanne de France, daughter of Louis XI., had been married at the age of twelve to Louis, Duke of Orleans, then aged fourteen. She was lame, and had one shoulder higher than the other, but her face was

full of intelligence, and her heart was that of a true and good woman. Louis made no attempt to love his wife. One day he spoke slightly of her to the king. Louis XI. replied: "Kinsman, you forget that your wife is virtuous, and that she is daughter of a mother against whom no one has dropped a word of reproach." A retort that stung, for the mother of Louis of Orleans, Mary of Cleves, did not bear the best of characters.

After the death of Louis XI. his daughter, Anne de Beaujeu, became regent during the minority of her brother, Charles VIII. A strong-minded and able woman, she was compelled to throw Louis of Orleans into prison at Bourges, after a series of violences and insurrections. Then his wife, Jeanne de France, never wearied in her efforts with her brother and the regent Anne to obtain his liberation. She spent her time either in the prison with him, offering her faithful service and consolations, or in besieging the regent Anne, now become Duchess of Bourbon, for his release. But Anne knew her brother too well; he was doubly perjured, ambitious, and certain to stir up civil broils.

When Charles VIII. was aged twenty-one he determined on taking the reins of government out of the firm hands of his sister, and one of his first acts was to let Louis of Orleans out of prison.

Whilst Jeanne de France had been urging the release of a husband who was to her ever a source of humiliation and pain, Anne of Brittany, ten years her junior, saw sovereigns at her feet. But it was not without concern that she awaited the time for



the assumption of the ducal crown. Her father favoured the pretensions of the *Sieur Alain d'Albret* to her hand. He was aged forty, and was the father of a large family, and she a girl of fifteen. He was a coarse-featured man with brutal manners, and inspired only disgust in Anne's mind.

Then her father entered into a treaty with *Charles VIII.* which bound him not to marry his daughter contrary to the royal will.

Three weeks after the signature of this treaty *Francis II.* died, and at once her hand was solicited for the *King of Castille*, and for *Maximilian of Austria*. At the same time the *Viscount of Rohan* put in his claim. "*Duc ne daigne, Roi ne puis, Rohan suis,*" was the proud device of the *Rohans*. *Alain d'Albret*, moreover, resumed his suit, and claimed that her word had already been passed to him. Anne protested that when aged twelve she had undertaken to submit in the matter to her father's wishes, but that she was now free to follow her own likings. Thereupon the *Maréchal de Rieux*, governor of Anne, who had favoured the pretensions of *Alain d'Albret*, retired, marking his course with fire and bloodshed.

*Alain* occupied *Nantes*, and vowed he would not surrender the town till Anne promised to marry him. She fled to *Rennes*, where the good citizens undertook to defend her against such overwarm suitors.

The French king sent troops into *Brittany* to capture the heiress and convey her to *Paris*, and they seized on *Redon*.

Then six thousand English, sent by *Henry VII.*,

and two thousand Castillians disembarked in Brittany to prosecute, sword in one hand and firebrand in the other, the suit of the favoured rival. At the same time the Breton peasants broke out in revolt in the country of Quimper, and it was necessary to carry war into these cantons, a war of extermination like the Jacquerie.

To add to the confusion, the young duchess learned that Henry VII. of England secretly favoured the Sire d'Albret, and that she ran the risk of falling into the hands of the English, and of being conveyed away to London.

Finding herself and her poor country exposed to such dangers, Anne resolved on giving herself a strong support, and she was secretly affianced to Maximilian of Austria, King of the Romans.

The ceremony was performed by proxy, the ambassador of Maximilian making answer in his name, and then, in the presence of witnesses, thrusting his leg, bared to the knee, into the nuptial couch.

No sooner did the regent Anne hear of this than she sent a second French army into Brittany, and at the same time set the theologians of Paris to issue a decree that such a marriage as that contracted by the Duchess Anne was invalid. To clench the matter, Charles VIII. offered Anne his hand, and to make her Queen of France.

Anne of Brittany, however, preferred Maximilian, and if that prince had prosecuted his claim with vigour he would have become master of Brittany. But Maximilian was always penniless. A journey to Brittany would cost two thousand crowns, which

was beyond his means. Moreover, he was engaged in Hungary resisting Matthias Corvinus. Thus he lost at once his wife, her duchy, and his own daughter Margaret, who had been affianced to Charles VIII., and whom this king cast aside for the hand of Anne —affianced to the King of the Romans.

At once Charles hastened to Rennes, under the pretext of making a pilgrimage, saw Anne of Brittany, and was betrothed to her. The marriage took place on December 6th, 1491.

No cloud troubled her married life with Charles, who loved her, and she was warmly attached to him. She bore him four children. The eldest died at the age of three, and the Queen was inconsolable. Charles ordered a tournament as a distraction, and Louis, Duke of Orleans, danced a ballet before her.

"Sir!" said the Queen, "how can you dance before me when tears are in my eyes?"

Charles VIII. died suddenly. In passing under a low arch he knocked his head against it, and never recovered sensibility. By his death Louis of Orleans became King.

The Queen was inconsolable, and clothed herself and her court in black. Hitherto the mourning colour of French queens had been *white*.

"I have lost my life, my happiness!" she said, and returned to Brittany.

Jeanne de France was now Queen, as her husband ascended the throne as Louis XII. But, poor woman, gladly would she have surrendered all the pomp and power of majesty for the heart of her husband. Nay, even for one kind word from his lips. They had

been married for four-and-twenty years, and she had devoted herself to him faithfully without receiving any return. Little did she dream of the fresh humiliation to which she was to be exposed.

Louis XII. saw clearly that the hold on the Duchy of Brittany acquired by Charles VIII. must not be relaxed. He at once began to profess conscientious scruples about his own marriage with Jeanne. They were related within the forbidden degrees. But for their marriage a papal dispensation had been obtained.

Louis had the effrontery to invite his wife to declare that she had been forced into marriage with him against her will. She refused to do so. She would take no step to obtain a decree of nullity. Louis was accordingly forced to sue for such a judgment himself.

The Church has always held the indissolubility of Christian marriage. No pope or bishop has dared to divorce those who have been united. But the Court of Rome has devised an ingenious method of wriggling out of the difficulty, and accommodating princes and rich men—of course, for a consideration.

This is to go into the manner of the union, and discover in it certain flaws, by virtue of which the marriage may be declared null.

Louis XII. appealed to the Pope, Alexander VI., and the impious farce was set in motion. The bishops of le Mans, Albi, and Ceuta were commissioned by the Pope to inquire into the validity of the marriage, which had taken place twenty-four years before.

Jeanne's dignity did not desert her. She denied

the motives alleged by Louis. They had received a dispensation on account of their cousinship. As to compulsion, in all the years of their married life her husband had never breathed a word to that effect.

"I am not come of so low an estate," said she, "that compulsion was necessary to get a man to marry me. I know that I am not beautiful, nor so shapely as are some others."

Then Louis XII. swore solemnly that he had been forced into matrimony against his wishes.

"Sire!" said Jeanne, "I have not always done all that you might have desired of me, or been all that you might have wished, but I have suffered deeply."

The three papal commissioners wiped their eyes and presented their report to Alexander VI., who pocketed the heavy fees sent by Louis, and declared the marriage null and void. It is by such hypocritical traffic in things of common decency and sacred obligation that the Court of Rome has become a by-word in Christendom.

Nine months exactly to a day after the death of Charles VIII., Anne of Brittany married Louis XII., January 7th, 1499.

Anne had her good qualities, but she had a truly feminine implacability of hate. In 1505 the King was dangerously ill. Anne sat by him night and day; but knowing that on his death Francis of Angoulême would succeed to the throne, she had four boats laded with her treasures to be sent to Nantes. The Maréchal de Gié, Governor of Angers, arrested them. Should the King die, these riches would be saved to the State, so he argued. But,

unhappily for him, the King recovered, and then Anne insisted on De Gié being relieved of his charges and dismissed the court. The Marshal retired to a little country house he had called "Le Verger," the Orchard. This did not content Anne; she had a criminal prosecution begun against him on some trumped-up charge, which lasted two years. The Parliament of Toulouse, rather to satisfy the Queen than convinced that he was guilty, condemned him to the confiscation of his goods. Anne had asked for his head.

"Well," said she, when the judgment of the court was read to her, "I am glad that he is left his life, that he may have longer to suffer."

This procedure of the Queen against De Gié provoked general comment, and a farce was put on the stage in Paris, in which one of the clowns said, "Un *maréchal* ayant voulu ferrer un *âne* [Anne], a reçu un coup de pied qui l'a rejeté de la *cour* dans le *Verger*" (an allusion to his country house). And this was received with roars of applause.

Anne detested Louise de Savoie, mother of François d'Angoulême, who was heir to the throne. The political expediency which had prompted the putting away of Jeanne de France and dissolving her marriage with Louis XII. had not produced the result anticipated. Anne bore the King a daughter, Claude, but no son, and she could not forgive Louise de Savoie for being more fortunate than herself. No urgency of her husband and his ministers would induce her to consent to Claude being affianced to Francis; she preferred an alliance with Charles of Austria, after-





ALLÉE COUVERTE, ESSÉ



wards Charles V. "Why, madam," said the King, "you want to unite the cats with the mice." It was not till after her death that the affiance took place.

When she endeavoured to interfere with her husband in his military projects, "Madam," said he, "of old the dams had horns as well as the stags, but they made a bad use of them, and God struck them off."

Louis was wont to call her his *petite Brette*, and her heart was ever in her native province. At Blois is shown the balcony from which she loved to contemplate her Breton guard.

In the war with England (1512) she equipped at her own cost the vessel called the *Cordelière*, that had such a glorious but fatal history. It was named after the cord of S. Francis, with which she surrounded the arms of Brittany. She held the Franciscans in great esteem, and founded an order of chivalry, whose badge was the cord.

Anne died at Blois at the age of thirty-nine, in 1514; her body was interred at S. Denis, and her heart in the convent of the Chartreux at Nantes.

From Rennes several particularly interesting excursions may be made. At Essé, near Janzé, is perhaps the finest *allée couverte* in Brittany. It is a gallery 43 feet in length, and consists of a principal chamber and a vestibule. The first coverer of the former rests on two pointed stones, and the interior is divided into compartments. The first coverer is an enormous stone. The monument goes by the name of the "Roche aux fées." At Janzé there is a menhir as well.

Mediæval times are well represented at Vitré, which

retains its walls and towers and its château in admirable preservation, capped with conical roofs. The interior of the town possesses many ancient houses, and the streets are a tangle of intricacies. The town occupies a summit of dark schist rock rising above the Vilaine. The church of Notre Dame is of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but possesses a modern spire. The castle is turned into a museum, and contains tapestries and paintings. In the court is a beautiful Renaissance turret. The place is to the North of France what Carcassonne is to the South, and should not be neglected by a visitor to Brittany.

At S. Armel is the tomb of the saint and his holy well, an object of pilgrimage. Armel or Arthmael is the same as the patron of Ploermel.

The castle of les Roches, near Vitré, was the residence of Mme. de Sévigné, and is one of the best-preserved historic monuments of the department. It is of the Flamboyant and Renaissance periods.

Mme. de Sévigné in her letters describes with emotion the hangings that took place after the rising of the Bretons in the reign of Louis XIV. The Bretons had borne with impatience the loss of their peculiar privileges. At every critical period since the union of the duchy with France they had striven to recover some of their lost rights, and something of the former autonomy of the province. Henry IV. did not enter Rennes till 1598, after he had been master of Paris for four years.

Even during the minority of Louis XV. they had risen in the same cause, but this last revolt cost the

Breton nobles dear, for many of the principal among them lost their heads on the scaffold.

Near Janzé is a village with a very odd name—Corps-nuds—where there is a chapel of the Three Maries, the object of pilgrimage. It now possesses a spick-and-span new church, but I remember the old church fifty years ago. I was there on Midsummer Day. An indescribable clatter was being made among the bells. I went inside the belfry and found the sexton there in his shirt-sleeves; he had tied a broomstick by the middle among the bells, and was rushing about the belfry clashing the stick against the bells, making noise if not music. Moreover, from the tower floated a *black* flag. On examining it attentively it struck me that it had a peculiar shape, and possessed a large square patch in it. When the sexton paused in his labours I ventured to question him relative to this streamer. “Mais, monsieur, oui,” said he; “that is an old pair of my trousers with a seat inserted by my old woman. I have split up the legs, and hoisted it. We have no other parish flag. Il faut bien faire quelque chose à l’honneur de Saint Jean!”

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